

# DN disabilitynow

the campaigning newspaper that puts you in the picture

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## Some kind of joke

Campaigners have called for new laws to clamp down on offensive "jokes" about disabled people on television and radio.

Both the BBC and ITV have failed to halt a string of recent incidents, including "jokes" made by the BBC's Jonathan Ross (DN, April) and ITV comedian Frank Skinner.

One possible legal step would be to introduce an equivalent to the offence of incitement to racial hatred.

Ross compared a man on his 19 April radio show to "someone you'd see in a Variety bus".

He had already fueled complaints after a "joke" on *They Think It's All Over* in January.

Skinner sparked fresh anger after comments about people with restricted growth in his *Baddiel and Skinner Unplanned* show on ITV on 26 March.

This came after the Broadcasting Standards Commission (BSC) upheld

complaints about his 29 January show.

The BBC refused to comment about Ross's latest "joke" or a routine on *Have I Got News For You* mocking David Blunkett's visual impairment, because it said it had received no official complaints. It said it was happy with its guidelines for producers.

ITV said it didn't condone Skinner's remarks, but refused to comment further.

Andy Rickell, chief executive of the British Council of Disabled People, said: "This particular aspect of discrimination is not going to be tackled until there is legislation."

And April Barrett, of the Restricted Growth Association, said: "We have to get the government to act. People are giving their children up for adoption because of this sort of thing. I can't explain how it makes me feel - I just want to cry."

Bert Massie, chairman of

the Disability Rights Commission, said: "If these comments were made in a racial context, they would be thoroughly unacceptable."

More than 80 MPs have signed an early day motion by Liberal Democrat MP Patsy Calton, condemning offensive comments about people with restricted growth. Calton is hosting a Commons awareness-raising event in November.

Flip den Uil, who lodged a complaint with the BBC about an incident on Johnny Vaughan's chat show, said: "I ask myself as a disabled person, why should I pay for my licence if all I get is abuse thrown at me?"

A Department for Work and Pensions spokesman said the government had no plans to legislate.

\* To lodge a complaint, visit [www.itc.org.uk](http://www.itc.org.uk) (Independent Television Commission) or [www.bsc.org.uk](http://www.bsc.org.uk) and tell DN.



Mother's pride: Sue Cawkwell, from Hull, who has two disabled children, has been named Britain's Best Mum by GMTV viewers. She works for the charity KIDS, helping families with disabled children gain places in mainstream schools. She is pictured with her three children, Josh, 11, Sophie, nine, and Charlotte, four.

On the cover: Gulf War veteran Allen Parton and his assistance dog Endal launched a new virtual reality tour of the Royal Navy's historic 19th century warship HMS Warrior 1860 at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. It allows visitors to view inaccessible parts of the ship. [www.flagship.org.uk](http://www.flagship.org.uk)

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## Great brain robbery

Mental health charities have called for a law change after a report, published last month, showed that thousands of disabled peoples' brains were illegally removed after their deaths.

According to the report, between 1970 and 1999, at least 23,000 brains were taken for research without consent. Most of the people had mental health problems.

Mind and Rethink called on the government to make it an offence to retain organs without relatives' consent. Mind said this could be the "tip of the iceberg" and called for more research.

Rethink chief executive Cliff Prior said: "This report is a shocking indictment of the way people with severe mental illness and their families have been treated for decades."

SANE chief executive, Marjorie Wallace, said it was vital the findings and "emotions surrounding this and previous inquiries" didn't halt research.

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– 24 pages of information, advice, road tests and comment

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**22,784**  
17/01 - 30/6/02





# Workers outraged over "disgraceful" pay offer

Britain's biggest supported employer of disabled people is facing the possibility of strike action by disabled workers over a "disgraceful" pay offer.

Workers at Remploy factories voted six to one to reject the company's pay increase of £5.52 per week in May and are seeking £20 across the board.

Union GMB said Remploy employees, who earn an average of £10,000 per year, are "up in arms" about the offer and additional plans to scrap their travel expenses.

Remploy claimed the offer amounted to an average of 11 per cent, which could mean up to £22.20 per week over two

years for some workers.

But disabled shop steward Wendy Ford said the company was "moving figures from one column to another" and including sums from the consolidation of its bonus scheme.

She said: "We want a decent wage so that at the end of the day we can go home rewarded for our work and have a decent life. Some people manage on the wages, but others struggle a lot."

"One of the main problems is the travelling expenses. Remploy factories are often a long way away and it can be expensive to get there."

GMB national officer Phil Davies said: "Our members

deserve a decent pay rise. Just because they are disabled doesn't mean that they are cheap labour. They deserve respect and this offer is a disgrace."

Davies said Remploy furniture factory workers earned £5.25 an hour compared to £8 for similar jobs in local firms.

A Remploy spokeswoman said the figures were "selective and not helpful" and that the company paid competitive salaries well above the minimum wage.

She added: "We no longer think it is appropriate for a commercial business to have systems of payment such as travel expenses."

## Concern over new company

The launch of a new company to run the Motability scheme for powered wheelchairs and scooters has gone ahead, despite continuing concern among retailers and manufacturers.

Some disgruntled dealers are still threatening to call for a judicial review of the decision to award the six-year contract to Route2Mobility (R2M).

R2M, launched on 1 May, has signed up more than 200 dealers in scooters and powered wheelchairs, but only one of five major national manufac-

turers, although another has agreed to join.

R2M says it has improved customer service and choice and increased value for money, with price cuts of 10 per cent.

Simon Knighton, commercial director of the Enabling Partnership, R2M's majority shareholder, said the scheme had made "excellent progress", but it needed more manufacturers to supply products.

Ray Hodgkinson, director-general of the British Healthcare Trades Association (BHTA),

accused R2M of "naivety" and said suppliers were "very unhappy", particularly that enforced price cuts would cut their profit margins and ability to offer customer support.

But he said BHTA had decided not to back the threatened legal action. "We are very concerned to see some harmony and get things on track," he said.

Eric Dixon, of A1 Mobility in Blackpool, said a legal challenge could still go ahead. "So far, the support from our industry (for R2M) is zilch."



Scents and sensibility: Bridie Dillon and Emily Allen enjoy the new sensory garden at the Kingsgate Resource Centre in Kilburn. The garden was opened last month to mark the European Year of Disabled People. It was built by volunteers from Go London, with funding from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and Camden council.

### In brief

#### Here comes the bus

The giant "bus" that will visit every European Union country during the European Year of Disabled People will make its first UK appearance in south London on 2 June.\*

The bus will act as a focal point for events across the country until 2 July.  
\* [www.disability.gov.uk](http://www.disability.gov.uk)

#### Call for support

Mencap is to call for more local authority support for families caring for children and adults with severe or profound learning disabilities.

The charity's new campaign, Breaking Point\*, will be launched this month, when it publishes new research showing the extent of the problems faced by these families.

\* [www.mencap.org.uk/breakingpoint](http://www.mencap.org.uk/breakingpoint)

## Isle of Man to introduce suicide bill

The Isle of Man parliament voted last month to consider legalising medically-assisted suicide.

Members voted 15 to four in favour of introducing a bill to legalise the practice and a committee will now investigate the issue ahead of potential legislation. Supporters say the bill will not allow people from the rest of the UK to travel to the island to die.

The Voluntary Euthanasia Society said the Isle of Man had addressed the issue seriously and called on the British parliament to "do the same".

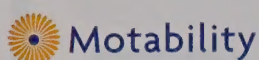
But the Disability Rights Commission warned: "Until disabled people are treated equally with their lives accorded the same value as non-disabled people, then the right to die may jeopardise disabled people's right to live."

See also page 14.

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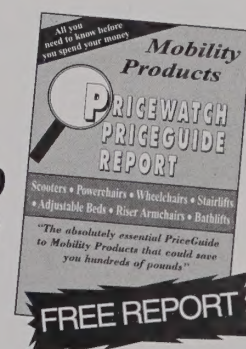
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NUALA CALVI

# Patients speak out

The head of Britain's leading mental health charity has called for the drug regulatory system to be dismantled in favour of one driven by patient power.

MIND chief executive Richard Brook made the call following a demonstration (left) outside the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) last month over the antidepressant Seroxat.

The charity said the MHRA, formerly the Medicines Control Agency, had played "Russian roulette" with people's lives by

failing to listen to their accounts of the side effects they suffered because of the drug.

It said emails and calls received by a BBC *Panorama* programme, screened on 12 May, reported 16 suicides linked to Seroxat over the last two years.

"These suicides have not been reported to the MHRA through its regulatory system," said Brook. "Consumers are meant to be at the centre of the health service. The system is too full of people with interests in pharmaceutical bodies, as

proved by the recent dissolving of the committee (set up by MHRA to review Seroxat-type drugs – DN May)."

An MHRA spokeswoman said there was "no evidence on the basis of the programme by *Panorama* that the MHRA needs to be dismantled".

An MHRA statement said a new group would carry out an independent review of Seroxat's safety, with patient representatives invited to take part and patient information "carefully reviewed".

## DRC call for legislation

The first major review of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) has called for the loophole allowing discrimination against people with progressive conditions to be closed.

The Disability Rights Commission (DRC) report, *Disability Equality: Making it happen*,\* demands urgent legislation to ensure protection from the point of diagnosis for conditions such as cancer, HIV or multiple sclerosis.

It also recommends removing the requirement that a mental illness must be "clinically well-recognised", and extend-

ing the DDA to include people with a genetic predisposition to conditions.

The DRC said it had been "powerless" to deal with over 2,000 situations in which disabled people had been sacked or refused access to services but were not covered by the law.

DRC chairman Bert Massie said: "The government has signalled its willingness to introduce greater protection for disabled people, but there is no timetable for action.

"We need to see all these proposals on the statute books before the DRC is swept into

a single equality body."

Other recommendations include creating a new offence of hate crimes against disabled people, putting a duty on employers to remove barriers to access for potential applicants and workers, and giving tribunals the power to force companies to reinstate sacked workers.

The Department for Work and Pensions welcomed the report but could not confirm which recommendations would appear in its draft disability bill promised later this year.

\* From DRC, tel: 08457 622633

## DN CAMPAIGN



## Ice cream violation

DIY giant B&Q has apologised for allowing an ice-cream van to sell cornets in a disabled parking bay.

When DN reader Zoe Abery complained to staff at the B&Q Warehouse in Reading last month, she was told there were "plenty of bays" available.

She said she was "angry and upset" at the store's refusal to take her complaint seriously and asked the van to move.

A B&Q spokeswoman said: "Under no circumstances would we allow the use of accessible spaces for an ice cream van, and I am sorry that the staff in the store did not communicate this."

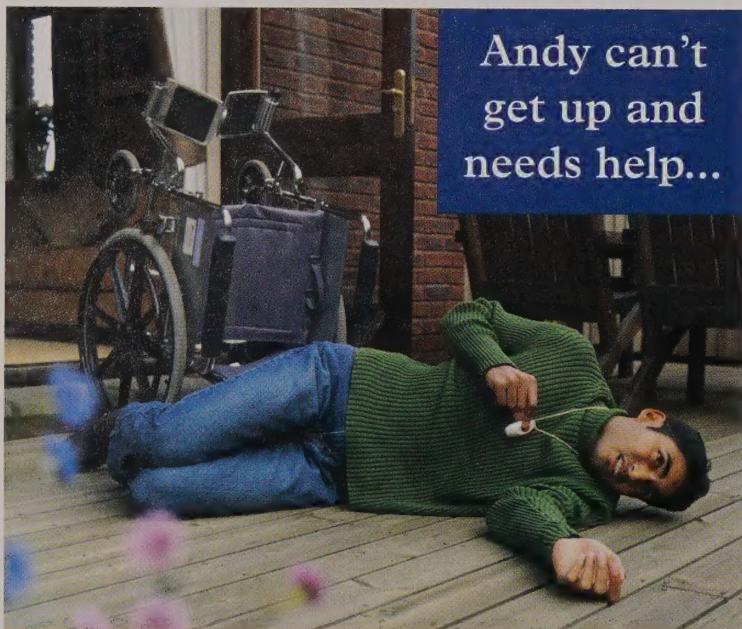
She said they would investigate the complaint and store staff would be reminded of B&Q's policies.

It is the third time B&Q stores have offended DN readers in recent months.

In March, DN reported that a disabled woman was banned from B&Q after allegations of "reckless" driving in her motorised scooter.

The previous month, we told how a disabled man with incontinence who urinated in a paint kettle because B&Q wouldn't let him use its toilet, was arrested and charged with criminal damage.

Have you been on any outings or seen any new sites that would appeal to other DN readers? We're planning our annual, three-month 'Out and about' series and are looking to hear from you. Send your ideas or suggestions to [editor@disabilitynow.org.uk](mailto:editor@disabilitynow.org.uk)



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## Sacked worker takes action

A partially sighted employee was sacked after taking sick leave for back pain she developed from leaning forward to see her computer screen.

Circle 33 Housing Group, in north London, employed Elena Langan for nine months without providing the computer speech programme she needed (DN May). It informed her last month her employment had been terminated because she had taken higher-than-average levels of sick leave, failed to meet call targets and spoke to the press.

Langan is now taking legal action under the Disability Discrimination Act through her union. She told DN that Circle 33 failed to produce evidence she had missed her work targets.

She added: "I never thought it would get to this. I've already been punished for taking sick leave by having my probation extended three times."

Circle 33 declined to comment because she was taking legal action.



# Professionals fail kids

Doctors and teachers are forcing children with ME to go to school, which is making their condition worse, new research shows.

The Tymes Trust, a charity for children with ME (Myalgic Encephalomyelitis), has compiled a report showing that children with the condition do not receive proper treatment because some doctors and teachers do not take their condition seriously.

Nine out of ten people who contacted the charity's helpline

said unreasonable demands made by schools was the biggest cause of relapse in children.

The report also showed that 84 per cent of children or their parents have felt intimidated by a professional.

Jane Colby, executive director of the Tymes Trust, said some consultants are even warning families against going to certain hospitals because of the poor treatment they will receive.

She added: "All that's needed is a change in attitude. If the GPs and teachers just listen to

the child, the whole thing would change overnight. It's simple."

Meanwhile, the government has announced a cash injection of £8.5m that will be used to develop ME clinical services where none currently exist.

Health minister Jacqui Smith said: "The causes are still not fully understood and this investment will enable the NHS to set up centres of expertise to develop clinical care, support clinical research and expand education and training programmes for health care professionals."

## In brief

### Arts alarm

A Mencap report says arts and tourism venues must start treating families with severely disabled children as valued customers.

*The Arts for All?*\* report found many staff "unhelpful" and access arrangements "complicated and inflexible".

\* web: [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

### Eagle's access

Disabled people's minister Maria Eagle has launched "Access All Areas", an awards scheme for small firms that "go the extra mile" for disabled customers.

She also launched *Act Now*, a video explaining the Disability Discrimination Act to businesses. *DDAinfo* pack @meads-ltd.co.uk

## Clark condemned

Education Secretary Charles Clarke has been attacked for appearing to suggest that too much money is being spent on educating disabled children.

Clarke said some local authorities chose to fund spending rises on special educational needs (SEN) instead of passing money direct to schools.

Campaigners said this implies such rises helped cause the schools funding crisis.

But a government spokeswoman said this was a "misconception".

"Charles Clarke never intended to say money was being wasted on SEN. Those increases may well be justified. We need to look at exactly what has been happening in each local education authority."

Clarke's comments came

weeks after campaigners said that a special schools report implied the government had broken a pledge to cut the use of special schools (*DN*, April).

Steve Broach, of the National Autistic Society, said Clarke's comments were "very unhelpful". "My colleagues and I have seen no evidence of money being spent unnecessarily on children with SEN. In fact, the reverse is true."

He said families had to "fight every step of the way" for SEN funding.

Richard Rieser, director of Disability Equality in Education,\* said the government was "groping around for anything to blame for their miscalculation" on spending allocations for schools.

\* [www.diseed.org.uk](http://www.diseed.org.uk)

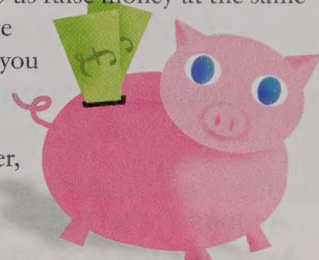


Karate Kid: Sinead Lurvy, 12, from Cwmbran, has been chosen to represent Wales in an international kick-boxing tournament. Sinead, who has cerebral palsy, will fight against a non-disabled junior squad from England in June.

## Treat yourself and help DN!

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## Bill call

Disability campaigners are calling on the government to ensure that disabled people are not forgotten in the new Communications Bill.

DIEL, the telecommunications disability advisory committee, is concerned the bill does not give disabled people sufficient representation. DIEL will cease to exist when the bill comes into force.

The Communications Bill outlines the duties and powers of Ofcom, the new regulator for the communications industry, which will also be responsible for digital TV, radio and mobile phones. The Bill is currently being discussed in Parliament.

DIEL wants the government to amend the bill to include a disability "champion" on the Ofcom board as well as a consumer committee to represent disability interests.

DIEL chair, Bob Twitchen, said: "If there isn't this kind of structure, there's a danger that problems won't improve."

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DN reports from the 1 May local elections and highlights the implications of the national polls in Scotland and Wales



STELLA HUGHES  
Step back: this caravan in the Vale of Glamorgan was one of many inaccessible polling stations in rural Wales. Staff had to bring ballot papers out to anyone unable to climb inside to vote. Pictured is Mandi Glover, chair of Scope Cwmpas Cymru, who was surveying polling stations.

## Polling access 'really dire'

The accessibility of polling stations in Wales seems to have worsened since the 2001 General Election, according to campaigners.

Initial findings from a survey of polling stations by the Polls Apart Cymru campaign, which includes the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) Wales and Scope Cwmpas Cymru, appear to show many Welsh local authorities merely paid "lip service" to access issues for the Welsh Assembly elections.

Gwilym Morris, of Polls Apart, told DN: "Despite some really good examples of good practice, the overall picture is really dire."

"They gave a lot of lip service to accessibility but really didn't

follow through with it."

After the last General Election, the Polls Apart\* campaign, headed by Scope, Capability Scotland and the DRC, showed almost seven in ten UK polling stations had access problems.

Scope is also evaluating pilot schemes which allowed voters in the English local elections to vote using methods such as text messages, the internet and postal ballots.

Morris said initial results were encouraging. "Some disabled people voted who had not voted for years and years," he said.

However, a Royal National Institute of the Blind investigation found "basic flaws" in sev-

eral council online voting sites.

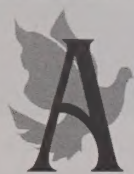
A spokeswoman for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister said: "We will endeavour to find out what the exact problems were and put them right for future years."

But she said there were "huge benefits" for disabled people in using many of the new voting methods.

Kate Higgins, of Capability Scotland (CS), said initial results from their access survey of polling stations indicated "some improvement".

But there was "still quite a bit of work to be done" and CS would now campaign for a law to force local authorities to make elections more accessible.

\*[www.pollsapart.org.uk](http://www.pollsapart.org.uk)



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## Reports from the regions

### Scotland

The increased diversity of parties in the new Scottish Parliament could create new campaigning opportunities for voluntary organisations, according to one charity.

The Scottish Parliament now has seven different political parties and three independents among its 129 MSPs.

It includes independent Dr Jean Turner, elected after campaigning mainly on hospital closures, seven seats for the Scottish Green Party and one for the Scottish Senior Citizens' Party.

Ian Welsh, chief executive of Scottish disability charity Momentum, said it demonstrated there was "a place in the Scottish Parliament for petitions, campaigns, lobbying and debate".

Arthritis Care in Scotland welcomed the commitment by probable coalition parties Labour and the Liberal Democrats, to review prescription charging for people with some long-term conditions.

But Kate Higgins, of Capability Scotland, said disabled people "did not get a mention" in the election campaign.

She said: "No-one focused on the needs of disabled people as an important voters group or an important group in society."

### Wales

Campaigners say Labour's success in May's Welsh Assembly elections could usher in free prescriptions and the abolition of all charges for domiciliary care services.

Both measures were in Labour's manifesto and disability organisations have pledged to ensure the new Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) implements the measures.

David Groves, of Disability Wales, said the measures would be a "major social policy advance", with people receiving the domiciliary care they need.

Jim Crowe, director of learning disability umbrella body SCOVO, also welcomed the two proposals, but said he was "extremely disappointed" the war in Iraq had allowed little chance to highlight issues such as jobs and inclusion in mainstream education.

He welcomed the reappointment of health minister Jane Hutt, who was "very committed" to disability issues. He also said SCOVO would continue to call for more learning disabled people to receive direct payments and ensure the WAG implemented previous policy commitments on learning disability, such as increased advocacy and supported living.

# Disability Awareness Day 2003

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**Reds alert:** Man Utd stars, including (from left) David Beckham, Ryan Giggs and Roy Keane, are supporting The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association's "Shades for a Day" event on 15 July. It will raise funds and awareness of eyecare in the sun.

# Left in dark over limbs

Funding for life-like artificial limbs is not filtering through to those who could benefit, according to charity consortium emPOWER.

It says money for silicone cosmesis – the "more attractive" prosthetic limbs – was released for Disablement Services Centres to allocate to patients. But patients are not being told

the equipment is available.

A spokeswoman said: "We don't want money going into other areas of the NHS which have higher targets to meet. So far, there is no demand because people are unaware of it."

A Department of Health spokeswoman said the government provided £4m for silicone cosmesis, but it was up to indi-

vidual trusts to provide services.

"We would expect people to be made aware of what options are available in local services."

Meanwhile, emPOWER published new national user standards for NHS mobility services.

emPOWER said there were still "unacceptable" variations in equipment availability, despite government promises in 2000.



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## Course cut

The decision to abandon a ground-breaking course for disabled artists was due to be debated in the disability arts world as DN went to press.

Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts (LIPA) suspended its Certificate in Higher Education Performing Arts for Disabled Artists course, due to begin in September, after only four students accepted places.

It was due to be discussed at LIPA's *Finding the Spotlight* conference on education, training and employment for disabled artists, from 28 to 31 May.

The college said it "deeply regrets" suspending the course, which had "struggled to find its market" since launching in 2000.

Ruth Gould, creative director of North West Disability Arts Forum, which helped set up the course, said: "We are going to ask the disability community what is needed and why this has happened."

## In brief

### Drive for difference

Arthritis Care has launched a five-year plan, "Making a Difference", to improve the quality of life for people with arthritis. It includes calls for social inclusion, better access to facilities and improved working conditions.

### Opportunity knocks

A government-backed body is aiming to develop more volunteering opportunities for disabled people over the age of 50. The Experience Corps\* hopes its new specialist disability adviser, Terry Charles-Mclean, will create more "positive volunteering experiences".

\* Call 0800 106080 or visit [www.experiencecorps.co.uk](http://www.experiencecorps.co.uk)





Tangerine dream: teachers from Frontline Dance demonstrated the potential of dance for disabled people with its Inclusion2 project, backed by a government Sportmatch award. Cyclone Mobility and Fitness gave £5,000 to fund a video and resource pack. [www.sportmatch.co.uk](http://www.sportmatch.co.uk)

## Where's the breakdown service? Don't AAsk

The Automobile Association (AA) has been attacked for stopping its mobility scooter breakdown service.

The AA said it stopped the service because it could only offer disabled people a second-class service using local garages and ambulance services.

Jane Keer, AA's diversity manager, said: "We were leaving people for up to five hours in the cold and wet. Our service was appalling. We couldn't morally take their money."

She said the AA is now researching how the service could be improved.

But Barry Simpkins, of Reading, has become a prisoner in his own home after the AA

told him it could no longer cover him.

He told *DN* he was now too scared to use his scooter in case it broke down. He said: "I am petrified of going out for any length of time. If I get stuck in town, how can I get back? My quality of life has gone."

Ed Passant, chief executive of the Disabled Drivers' Motor Club, said the AA's decision was "pathetic" but breakdown cover was available elsewhere.

"The AA are saying, 'We are so worried that we are not doing enough for disabled people that we are now not doing anything at all'. It ought to be investigated under the Disability Discrimination Act."

# No time to talk

"Talking cures" are being denied to learning disabled people because of a misguided assumption that they will not be able to understand them, according to researchers.

A recent study found a "significant difference" in the ability of learning disabled people receiving cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) to control aggressive behaviour compared to those in routine care.

John Taylor, head of psychological therapies and research for Northgate and Prudhoe NHS Trust, one of the report's authors, said such therapies could reduce the need for behaviour control drugs or readmission to institutional care.

But he told a meeting organised by Mac Keith Press that therapists' "disdain" for "unat-

tractive" clients and the difficulties in conducting psychological assessments meant that learning disabled people had been denied therapies that could help them.

"CBT is just not routinely available for people with learning disabilities. It's partly a question of resources, partly the assumption they wouldn't be able to make sense of the treatment.

"We're saying if you modify the approach, we've demonstrated it does work."

Taylor said research on the benefits of psychotherapy for people with learning difficulties was "sorely lacking".

Little funding had been allocated by grant-giving bodies for academic research in the field, he said.

## Disabled population on the rise, says census

Almost 9.5 million people in England and Wales have some form of disability, according to new results from the 2001 Census.

The figures show there are more disabled people in the UK than previously thought, with 18.2 per cent saying they have a long-term illness, health problem or disability, which limits their daily activities and the work they could do.

This is an increase from 13.3 per cent in the 1991 Census.

The 2001 Census also showed a 3.4 per cent increase in the number of people aged 65 and over, and that one person in ten is an unpaid carer.

Lorna Reith, chief executive of Disability Alliance, said policy makers needed to recognise that a large number of people have medical conditions or a disability that affects their everyday lives.

"We have got figures that show that disability is not a minority interest," she said.

# News Review

The monthly round-up of news from the mainstream media

### Veterans' victory

Gulf War veterans' groups celebrated after a former lance corporal with the Royal Engineers won a landmark case against the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

A war pensions appeal tribunal accepted that vaccinations given to Alex Izett from Glasgow had caused his osteoporosis and that he had depression following the injections, which were classified as secret.

Campaigners hope the ruling will open the floodgates for similar claims.

The MoD is not appealing against the decision, but does not accept the existence of Gulf War Syndrome.

### Workplace warning

The Disability Rights Commission (DRC) published figures showing that workplace discrimination accounted for more than half of the 1,781 disability discrimination cases it investigated last year.

The DRC warned employers that discriminating against disabled people will cause them bad publicity and the loss of skilled workers.

### BSL to be GCSE

The British Deaf Association announced plans for a British Sign Language (BSL) Academy. The move follows government recognition of BSL as an official language (*DN* April).

The school – which will be the first to teach BSL as a GCSE – aims to tackle the shortage of sign language interpreters by improving the quality of sign language teaching and increasing the number of qualified tutors.

### Was Newton autistic?

Research in *New Scientist* magazine suggested that Albert Einstein and Isaac Newton could have had Asperger syndrome.

Autism expert Professor Simon Baron-Cohen, of Cambridge University, said although it was impossible to make a definite diagnosis for people who are no longer alive, they both had key symptoms, such as obsessive interests, difficulty with social relationships and communication problems.

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# Disability must climb third world agenda

A leading international disability expert has called on the government and non-governmental organisations such as Oxfam to make disability issues central to their work in developing countries.

Judith Heumann (*right*), the World Bank's first disability and development officer, said disability issues had failed to receive the same level of recog-

nition as gender issues in poverty reduction, despite estimates that 20 per cent of the world's poorest people are disabled.

Her comments come as research by Action on Disability and Development (ADD) and the Chronic Poverty Research Centre claims disabled people are "largely excluded from mainstream development programmes".

The report found 35 per cent of international development organisations employed no disabled people in their UK offices.

It said the government's Department for International Development (DFID) had produced a paper in 2000 calling for disabled people's needs and rights to be integrated into mainstream development work.

But the following year, the

DFID had drawn up a policy document on infrastructure development which made no mention of the need to ensure accessibility for disabled people.

Rebecca Yeo, policy officer at ADD, said: "Disabled people are still somehow seen as separate from the poorest people, that you have to have a separate organisation to deal with disability."



## Bay nightmare ends following DN support

An elderly couple from London who applied for a disabled parking bay and were told to concrete over their front garden have been offered a space following a council U-turn.

Lib Dem councillors praised DN for publicising the plight of Edwin and Margaret Higgs, from Brent, in London.

But the couple are still fighting for a change in the council's policy so other disabled people are not at risk of being refused a bay if they have a garden.

A council spokesman said the Higgs' had been given the bay because they did not own the freehold for the property and could not alter the garden.

He said the council would not be reviewing its policy but was altering the application form so people "understand the issue of suitable parking space on their property and whether it involves other residents".

Edwin Higgs, 79, who is diabetic and has trouble walking, told DN he was happy at the result but that it was only "round one".

He said: "I just hope other people will benefit from this."

### In brief

#### Treatment failure

Thousands of people who are deaf in one ear are not receiving treatment because doctors do not recognise how serious their condition is, a report has warned.

The Advisory Group for Single Sided Deafness says people are not offered rehabilitation despite effective treatment being available.

#### Amnesty report 'hope'

A training visit by Amnesty International and the Disabilities Trust to Bulgarian care homes for people with mental health problems has revealed "hope for improvement", despite "terrible" conditions.

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Fabb facelift: a Scottish organisation that helps disabled people access mainstream services has updated its image. Physically Handicapped and Able Bodied Scotland is now known as Facilitating Access Breaking Barriers Scotland (Fabb Scotland). Pictured (left to right) are Daniel Piggins, Jim McSharry and Jean Dunlop.

# New rules could help kids

Three new sets of guidelines\* could help improve the lives of disabled children and their families, say charities.

The guidance is aimed at creating stronger partnerships between parents and the professionals who provide education, health and social services.

The government's education and health departments have released *Together from the Start*, aimed at those working with very young disabled children and their families.

Scope and organisations such as Mencap have also issued *Right from the Start*, government-backed advice on the best way to share information with parents about their child's diagnosis (DN March).

And the Department for Education and Skills and the Royal National Institute for Deaf People have produced



*Developing Early Intervention/Support Services for Deaf Children and their Families*, to help local authorities support families of children identified through the new-born hearing screening programme.

Education minister Catherine Ashton (above, launching the guidance at the Phoenix Centre in Bromley) said: "All children have the right to the best possible start in life. Where they have special needs and disabilities, it

is particularly important that these are identified as early as possible."

Lesley Campbell, national children's officer for Mencap, said the new guidance was "important", but would only improve life for disabled children and their families if health, education and social services departments planned joint training and implementation of the guidelines.

\*[www.dfes.gov.uk/sen/](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/sen/)

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Recognising Individual Achievement

## Losing out on benefits

People with autism are missing out on the benefits and support they are entitled to, according to a new study\*.

The National Autistic Society survey of its members found "startling gaps" in provision of services for people with autism and Asperger syndrome.

Those at the high-functioning end of the autistic spectrum, young people between 16 and 24, and people with the lowest household incomes, all found it particularly difficult to access support.

Steve Broach, co-author of the report, said: "People with autism spectrum disorders continue to find themselves doubly excluded, first as a result of their social and communication impairments, and then because support services are not designed or equipped to effectively meet their needs."

The report found four in ten carers were dissatisfied with the support provided by social services and another 21 per cent were "very dissatisfied". More than one in three carers couldn't understand the benefits system.

A Department for Work and Pensions spokesman said it would give the report "careful consideration", and councils and NHS bodies should ensure "genuine choices for both clients and families".

He said the *Valuing People* white paper and other government initiatives would help. \**Autism: Rights in Reality: how people with autism spectrum disorders and their families are still missing out on their rights*, [www.nas.org.uk](http://www.nas.org.uk)

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# Autism overlooked

DN EXCLUSIVE BY NUALA CALVI

Autistic spectrum disorders are going undiagnosed in children with cerebral palsy (CP), according to leading speech therapists.

They say professionals are often unaware that communication difficulties are being caused by such disorders rather than by a child's severe physical disabilities.

And doctors are often reluctant to burden parents struggling to look after a child with CP with a secondary diagnosis.

As a result, children are receiving the wrong speech technologies and missing out

on early intervention by autism experts.

A paper to be published later this year by specialists at Great Ormond Street Hospital will call for early identification.

Katie Price, co-author and senior specialist in speech and language therapies, said: "I see children who are baffling their local teams because they can press the buttons on their voice output devices, yet they still don't use the machine."

"When you look at them you can see they either have autism or social communication and interaction problems."

"It's something which is very difficult to diagnose with CP."

Helen Cockerill, speech therapist at Guy's Hospital, said once a child is given a diagnosis of CP, "everything is attributed to that".

"Because everyone in medicine specialises, it depends which 'box' you end up in," she said.

Pam Stevenson, a speech and language therapist at Treloar School, said similar problems could occur with visual or hearing difficulties.

"For some children, they have such obvious problems that the less obvious ones don't get picked up."



Suits her: Minty Hoyer-Millar tries out the Adeli suit, an innovative treatment to improve posture and movement for people with cerebral palsy and other neuromuscular conditions, modelled on suits worn by Russian cosmonauts in space. Minty is the first English child to visit the Euromed Rehabilitation Center in Poland, which offers the therapy. See [www.euromed.pl](http://www.euromed.pl)

## Ignorance adds to diabetes health risks

Too many people with diabetes are putting their health at risk because they are ill-informed about their condition, according to a report by Diabetes UK\*.

Less than half realise diabetes can cause heart disease and almost three in ten do not know it is the leading cause of blindness in the working age population.

People with type two diabetes follow healthy eating advice only about half of the time, while two out of three do not take all their tablets, the report found.

Paul Streets, chief executive of Diabetes UK, urged people to take responsibility for managing their condition.

"People need the support of their doctors and nurses and if they are not getting it they should demand it," he said.

One month into the government's national service framework on diabetes, the charity found nearly six out of ten GP practices did not have diabetes clinics and only ten per cent had diabetes education programmes.

The Department of Health said it agreed that structured education for people with diabetes was needed and added that it would be addressed by the framework.

Meanwhile, it has announced £27 million to provide eye screening services for every person with diabetes by 2007.

\* Diabetes: Power to the People, available to download from [www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk)

## Dementia hopes

New research has offered treatment hope for the first time to people with moderate to severe dementia.

A study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found the drug Memantine, licensed in the UK since October 2002, could halve mental decline over a six-month period in patients who were losing the ability to dress, wash and use the toilet.

Unlike drugs for more mild forms of dementia, Memantine works by blocking the activity of glutamate to stop neurons becoming overstimulated and damaged.

The Alzheimer's Society said the results were a "significant finding" because no other drug has been found to be effective for people in the more severe stages of the disease.

Clive Evers, director of information, said many doctors were holding off prescribing Memantine because they were waiting for The National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) to review Alzheimer's treatments later this year.

But he said: "We would urge doctors to consider prescribing this drug for those people for whom it might be useful." [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

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## Whizz-Kidz speak out

Inaccessible transport in London and the South East is reducing young disabled people's quality of life, according to campaigners.

A conference in April held by children's mobility charity Whizz-Kidz gave young people the chance to talk to transport providers about how to make transport more inclusive.

Recommendations included speeding up plans for accessible trains, reducing the 24-hour advance notice for wheelchair-users to book train journeys and better staff training.

Josh Dennis, 18, who helped organise the event, welcomed the introduction of more accessible trains but said many improvements were "too little and too late".

After the conference, he told DN: "When I use public transport, I have to plan ahead. There is no chance of being spontaneous.

"The London Underground is the worst as the stations are so old, so I have to go with my mum or dad in the car."

A summary of findings will be sent to South West Trains, the Transportation Unit of West Sussex County Council and the Mobility and Inclusion Unit at the Department for Transport, the transport providers who attended the conference.

Another three regional conferences are planned\*.  
\* [www.whizz-kidz.org.uk](http://www.whizz-kidz.org.uk)

## Council creates risk on the road

A blind man is risking his life each time he goes shopping, because the council has refused to put a crossing on a busy main road.

Vaughan Rees (*right*), of Sherbourne, Warwickshire, and his guide dog, Webster, have to cross the A429 to go to a nearby village because there are no shops where he lives.

The road is so dangerous that The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association has told Rees it will rescind his insurance if he crosses the road again.

Rees said: "I was nearly killed trying to cross the road a couple of weeks ago.

"I've got to rely on my hear-

ing to cross the road. To me, it was safe, but the next thing I knew, there was a screech of brakes and the car stopped within three feet of my guide dog's nose."

The council said the crossing wasn't justified because only nine people crossed the road during a 12-hour survey.

Gafoor Din, leader of the council's traffic, signals and crossings team, said: "It's a difficult choice, but we have got criteria when providing pedestrian crossing facilities."

The council told Rees to use the dial-a-ride bus service, which costs £2 per journey, but which is not yet running.



## Hospital access claim

A wheelchair user is seeking compensation from a Scottish hospital trust after he was forced to use the women's toilet during a three-week hospital stay.

David Stark, from Glasgow, was admitted to Dykebar mental health hospital with depression but said its lack of accessible facilities made his condition worse.

Stark is now suing Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Primary Care NHS Trust, which runs the hospital, under

the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

During his stay, Stark had to use the women's toilet, which didn't have a lock, alarm or any support handles. He also had to wait for a member of staff to take him to the toilet.

He said: "The ward I was put into had no disabled facilities at all apart from a hoist in the ladies' loo. That got me down even more. Instead of getting a wee bit of a rest, it turned out to be the complete opposite.

"It wasn't a hospital that was suitable for my needs. I felt worse than I had felt in my whole life."

Stark says he will give any compensation to charity.

A spokesman for the hospital said it was unable to comment on individual cases, but is currently reviewing accessibility.

"At the moment we are looking at the DDA to see how we conform. We are looking to improve our disabled facilities," he said.

## Victory in guide dog case

A blind woman whose guide dog was refused entry into seven Hemel Hempstead restaurants has successfully sued one of them for £750 compensation.

Glenda Holding claimed she was discriminated against under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) when her dog Laurel was not allowed into the Mogul Indian Restaurant.

Holding, who was supported by the Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB), was awarded the compensation by Watford County Court after the restaurant owner didn't turn up to the hearing.

It was the seventh restaurant Holding had been banned from and she said it was the final straw.

"What has happened to me and other blind and partially sighted people is clearly against the law," she said.

"Not being allowed to take my guide dog into the Mogul Indian Restaurant left me feeling extremely humiliated and embarrassed."

Barrister Catherine Casserley, who represented her, said restaurant owners need to ensure their staff are aware of their obligations under the DDA.

Since winning her case, Holding has also been asked to leave a local stationery retailer which operates a no-dogs policy.

The RNIB is now considering producing a "yellow card" for people to show retailers, explaining that if they ban guide dogs, they are breaking the law.

### Long Term Foster Carers needed.

**Linesha is 9 years old. She has Autism**, severe learning difficulties and communication delay. She will be affected by Autism for the duration of her life however there are no ongoing medical concerns of any sort. Linesha has no speech however she has a highly developed personality that she displays with non-verbal communications such as body language and gestures. Linesha has a sense of humour and an independent spark, she will let you know what clothes or food she likes. Linesha enjoys going to church, shopping, watching TV and music. She also enjoys puzzles and activities that stimulate her mind.

Linesha is entitled to a Community Care package. She attends a school for children with Special Needs during the day. She receives after school care and day care at a Respite Unit. Linesha also participates in holiday play schemes.

**Linesha needs Long-term Foster carers** who are ideally of Black African Caribbean origin – either one or two-parent family. It is important that carers have the ability to understand, or the motivation to learn about her disability.

**For further information, please contact Sandy Ewers at Brent Placements, 328 – 330 High Road, Wembley, HA9 6AZ or telephone 020 8937 4535 or e-mail [sandy.ewers@brent.gov.uk](mailto:sandy.ewers@brent.gov.uk)**



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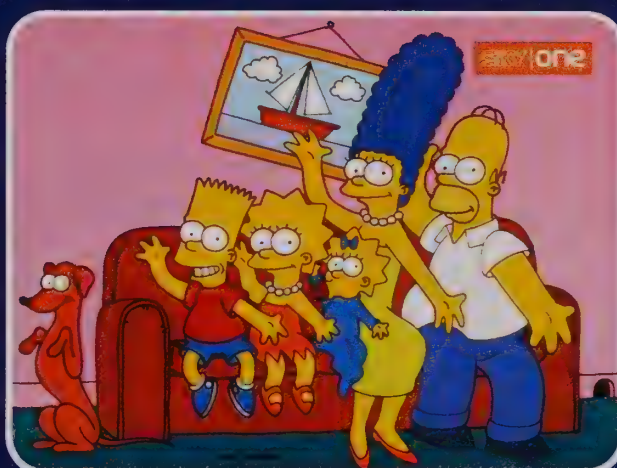
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# Life is life

A couple from Bedfordshire are the latest in a series of Britons who have travelled abroad for help to end their lives. The difference is that they were not terminally ill. John Pring reports on concerns raised by the latest case

When Robert and Jennifer Stokes became the latest British clients of the Dignitas clinic in Switzerland, they ensured that the controversial issues of euthanasia and assisted suicide would return yet again to the spotlight.

Dignitas was previously in the news in February when its staff assisted the suicide of Reg Crew, from Liverpool, who had the terminal condition motor neurone disease.

But one thing makes the Stokes' case particularly uncomfortable reading: although they had several chronic disabling conditions between them, neither appears to have had a terminal illness.

The picture is likely to remain confused until their inquest, but it appears that Mr Stokes had severe epilepsy and depression, and his wife had diabetes, back pain and possibly multiple sclerosis.

Jill Stewart, policy manager for independent living, health and social care for the Disability Rights Commission (DRC), says the case has highlighted some of the DRC's

concerns about the assisted suicide issue.

"It is this slippery slope that we are concerned about, that having introduced euthanasia and assisted suicide, the numbers of people affected just becomes bigger and bigger and bigger and starts encompassing more and more disabled people," she says.

Disabled campaigners also fear that cases like the Stokes' and that of Diane Pretty, who had motor neurone disease and campaigned unsuccessfully to be allowed to die with assistance, can give the impression that disabled people's lives are not worth living.

In a speech delivered on her behalf in February, Jane Campbell, chair of the Social Care Institute of Excellence, said she found this idea "deeply worrying".

"The public could be forgiven for getting the idea that anyone with a substantial level of disability will inevitably be deeply depressed and preoccupied with thoughts of dying," she said.

Some organisations have also questioned whether the



End of the road: The Dignitas clinic in Switzerland, where Robert and Jennifer Stokes ended their lives

Stokes, who lived in a flat in a care home in Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, were missing out on support that could have improved their quality of life.

Stewart says disabled people may in extreme cases be driven to suicide by a lack of support and resources, although it is not yet clear whether that is the case with the Stokes.

She says the Stokes' deaths also underline the DRC's concerns that any assisted suicide law could not include "robust" enough safeguards to protect disabled people.

Andy Rickell, chief executive of the British Council of Disabled People, says such cases that appear to "legitimise" the idea of euthanasia put disabled people in great danger.



Sadie Aston (left), an accident and emergency nursing sister at Queen's Medical Centre in Nottingham, is well aware of how living with epilepsy can lead to depression.

Married with two young children, she discovered she had epilepsy last year. Six months later she was diagnosed with depression.

"It's not the epilepsy, it's the consequences of it," she says. "Suddenly, your car is taken from you. You lose your independence. You're very isolated and people do not know what to say to you. The consequences of it can be enormous."

But she is "shocked and horrified" at reports that indicate Dignitas offered assisted suicide through an overdose of barbiturates to someone with epilepsy and depression.

"It is worrying that people know that they can go to a clinic and get hold of this stuff. That's frightening."

"If nothing else, there is support from other people with the illness. There is nothing better."

"The most worrying thing is that it potentially cheapens the value of human life, and it is only worth providing emotional and practical support up to a certain point. Beyond that point, 'sorry mate, you're costing too much'."

"In a world of rationing of health care and limited social services budgets, this is one way of keeping the budget down," says Rickell.

The fact that at least one of the couple had depression has also caused concern that the clinic helped someone with a mental health impairment to end their life.

MIND's Julia MacPherson points out: "Whatever the reason for someone's serious depression and associated suicidal feelings... those people should be getting the right treatment and help for that depression."

The Dignitas issue has raised

many serious concerns, then, but can anything be done to stop it offering its services to people from the UK?

Tim Loughton MP, Conservative shadow health minister and chair of the party's disability group, has called on the government to put pressure on its Swiss colleagues to clamp down on foreign "tourists" using Dignitas.

But the Department of Health says that is not going to happen.

"It's illegal in this country. It's legal over there. We can't stop people from going over," says a spokeswoman.

She says the issues of euthanasia and assisted suicide raise "difficult ethical questions" for the government, which "welcomes public debate" but has "no plans at present" to change the law.

She says the government is helping to improve services for

people with long-term conditions, with schemes such as the Expert Patients' Programme, a pilot project that offers training to help people "self-manage" their conditions.

The facts of the Stokes' case remain cloudy at present.

Bedfordshire police say they "had a look" at the case but decided "if there was a crime, it has been conducted in Switzerland and not here".

Bedfordshire social services declined to say what kind of support, if any, they had been offering the couple.

The facts of this particular case are likely to become clearer at the inquest, due to be held some time in the next couple of months.

But the wider impact of the decision by Robert and Jennifer Stokes to ask for help to end their own lives at the clinic is already clear: it is yet another step on a very dangerous path.

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disabilitynow June 2003



# Introduction of INDEPENDENCE™ iGLIDE™ Manual Assist Wheelchair Revolutionizes Category With New Technology



**Independence Technology**, a Johnson & Johnson company, has announced the availability of the **INDEPENDENCE™ iGLIDE™** Manual Assist Wheelchair. The **iGLIDE™** Manual Assist Wheelchair operates similarly to a conventional manual wheelchair, but uses proprietary technology to supplement user input power. To the user, the **iGLIDE™** Manual Assist Wheelchair feels like a much lighter chair moving over a flat, smooth surface regardless of the terrain. Sensors and microprocessors provide motorized assistance, requiring much less effort from the user than required in a traditional manual wheelchair.

To move with the **iGLIDE™** Manual Assist Wheelchair, the user simply pushes the handrims as if propelling a standard manual wheelchair. The patented technology of the **iGLIDE™** Manual Assist Wheelchair monitors both the user's input and the resulting motion, determining the appropriate level of additive power to provide a similar feel even when ascending or descending ramps or crossing resistive terrain such as grass or soft carpet. To the casual observer, there is little perceived difference when viewing the contemporarily designed **iGLIDE™** Manual Assist Wheelchair, compared to a regular manual wheelchair. To the **iGLIDE™** Manual Assist

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system that provides the user with discreet power assistance. At approximately 55 pounds, the **iGLIDE™** Manual Assist Wheelchair was designed for easy transport, with quick-release wheels, battery removal and fold-down seatback.



## Independence Technology: A Company with a Mission

The company mission is to develop products and technology applications that help people with disabilities live their lives with greater freedom. With this product, Johnson & Johnson extends its tradition of innovative health care service to a community of nearly six million people worldwide who use wheelchairs.

In November, 2002, Independence Technology also received a unanimous recommendation for FDA approval from an expert independent advisory panel assembled by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to evaluate data for the company's **INDEPENDENCE™ iBOT™** Mobility System. The **iBOT™** Mobility

System operates on rechargeable battery power and uses a complex system of sensors, gyroscopes and electronics to simulate balance, enabling users to climb and descend stairs, navigate variable terrain, ascend kerbs and elevate, for extended periods, to a "standing" position. The company hopes to introduce the **iBOT™** Mobility System this year.



For additional information about the  
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# Still open to abuse

A new sexual offences bill aims to crack down on the abuse of learning disabled people. But is it tackling the problem in the right way? John Pring reports and Simone Aspis (*right*) comments

Every year, thousands of learning disabled people are raped or sexually assaulted, campaigners believe. But the number of successful prosecutions of such cases is tiny – estimates suggest as low as one per cent, and probably even lower than that.

For at least ten years, campaigners have been calling for new legislation to try to halt this epidemic of abuse.

Last November, the government finally acted. It announced that a new sexual offences bill would include three offences aimed at protecting learning disabled people and those with “mental disorders” from sexual exploitation.

It could help people like Helen\*, who became pregnant and had an abortion after being raped by a carer.

The case was dropped after the judge decided that Helen, who has a learning disability, consented to sex “by animal instinct”, an outcome that appalled campaigners.

Kathleen Franklin, chair of Milton Keynes People First, which is run by people with learning difficulties, welcomes

the new bill.

At least three members of her group have been sexually abused, but none of them have seen their attackers punished.

“They are really scared now,” she says. “A person that is not going to be nice to the person with learning difficulties and is going to abuse them, I don’t agree with. There is a difference between having sex and having it forced onto you.”

Alan Corbett, director of the charity Respond, which offers counselling and therapy to learning disabled victims of abuse, also welcomes the act.

He says calls to Respond’s helpline from learning disabled people who have been sexually abused have more than doubled in the last year.

And he believes abuse is far more common than the 1,400 cases a year usually quoted.

“People aren’t particularly interested in finding out more about the incidence of abuse, probably because it is so horrifyingly high,” he says.

The bill, currently going through its committee stage in Parliament, will increase the maximum penalty for having



Sex crime: The Respond website provides images and information to help learning disabled people identify sexual abuse

sex with someone with a severe learning disability or “mental disorder” from two years to life imprisonment.

Those who obtain sex with a learning disabled or “mentally disordered” person through bribes, threats or deception, could also face a life sentence.

It also bans carers from sexual activity with such clients, with a maximum sentence of 14 years.

But will a new act result in more successful prosecutions?

Kathryn Stone, director of the charity Voice UK, which supports learning disabled people who have experienced crime or abuse, campaigned strongly for a new bill, but fears it will be scuppered by problems in the criminal justice system.

“Special measures” in the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 were supposed to make it easier for learning disabled people to give evidence, but Stone says implementation has been “patchy and very piecemeal”.

Although she has some “brilliant examples” of police forces “leaning over backwards” to use the special measures, she also has “story after story after story” of bad practice.

In one case, a learning disabled man who was seriously sexually assaulted in a pub toilet was taken back by a police officer to the same pub to be interviewed on video.

“There is little point in

bringing in new laws if there is not the means to put them into practice,” she says.

Corbett agrees. “Many of the cases we are hearing about are not being responded to properly by the criminal justice system.”

A Home Office spokesman said: “We know there are problems in the criminal justice system, but that is what we are in the business of correcting. If it turns out... that more needs to be done, then we will do that.”

Some people with learning difficulties (*see Simone Aspis, right*) say the bill threatens their rights to a sex life and could lead to them facing tests on whether they are able to consent to sex.

It could criminalise sex between consenting learning disabled people, they say.

There will be new guidance for the Crown Prosecution Service on this issue, but Corbett says there is also an urgent need for training for staff working with learning disabled people, even before the bill becomes law.

As Stone says: “Everyone has a right to sexuality and sexual experience, but it has to be based on their informed consent. Sadly, there are people who are going to abuse very, very vulnerable people.”

\*Her name has been changed. Respond’s free helpline, tel: 0808 8080700, or [www.respond.org.uk](http://www.respond.org.uk) Voice UK, tel: 01332 202555, or [www.voiceuk.clara.net](http://www.voiceuk.clara.net)



The impending sex offences bill will be tackling sexual abuse of people with learning difficulties in the wrong way.

The higher sentences for having sexual intercourse with a person with learning difficulties will give more reason for people in power, such as care workers and parents, to prevent people with learning difficulties from having sex.

Furthermore, such legislation may deter close and intimate relationships between people with learning difficulties and non disabled people.

The new law rests on the issue of consent: did the person agree to the sexual relationship? Mencap would like a test which people with learning difficulties would have to “pass” in order to prove their consent was informed.

There would be outrage if non disabled people were subjected to such a test during court proceedings, so why should this be different for people with learning difficulties?

Even if such a specific consent test was not used, it is likely that IQ scores will be used to re-enforce the assumption that people with learning difficulties cannot give informed consent.

Under the new law, the provision of sexually explicit pictures and videos to people with learning difficulties – which may serve a genuine educational purpose – could be construed as procuring the person, with the intent to have unlawful sex, which is an offence.

Additionally, the legislation does not say who has the authority to refer the case to the police, which means parents, support workers, social workers and other professionals who disapprove of their child or client’s sexual relationship could take advantage of the new law to break it up.

The best way to deter perpetrators is to increase the severity of punishment for people found guilty of unconsented sex with anyone, whether they are disabled or not.

Simone Aspis is a disability rights activist and a member of People First.

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# Change is slow

In the last of *DN*'s employment surveys, Nuala Calvi finds that numbers of disabled people in government departments are still low

The government may be vociferous about its drive to encourage companies to employ more disabled people, but *DN*'s latest survey suggests it should start looking in its own back yard.

The results show there are still "appallingly" low levels of employment of disabled people in all government departments, especially higher up the ladder.

No government department can report a rise in the number of middle or senior managers with a disability since our last survey in 2001.

Only four departments have increased the overall percentage of disabled staff: the Ministry of Defence, which has gone up by 1.9 per cent, the Department for Work and Pensions, up by 0.3 per cent, the Home Office, by 0.2 per cent, and the Lord Chancellor's

Office, by 0.18 per cent. Shockingly, the Department for Health – the department responsible for social care – has fallen on both overall employment and the percentage of senior civil servants. The Department for Transport comes out worst overall, with just 2.4 per cent of staff disabled.

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) comes top of the table by far, at 7.9 per cent. Yet it says it is not doing anything other departments couldn't do.

"Initiatives which have helped us include the guaranteed interview scheme, and the Cabinet Office's bursaries for disabled people," says a spokesman.

"The bursaries invest about £10,000 into progressing the careers of people of middle ranking grades

who show promise." The MoD says the key is making sure that such schemes are well promoted among its disabled staff, and that job adverts and application forms reflect its commitment to helping disabled people fulfil their potential.

At the other end of the scale, the Department for Transport also says it uses a guaranteed interview scheme, offers work placements to disabled graduates, and consults with its internal staff disability network.

But its efforts, along with those of other departments, do not impress campaigners like Brenda Ellis, of Greater London Action on Disability.

"These are appallingly low levels generally. It's an indictment of how real the government's commitment is to

engaging disabled people in the workforce. "There needs to be more work done by the minister for disabled people because the government's workforce is completely unrepresentative.

"Once again, disabled people have come at the bottom of the pile compared to other minority groups."

Her comments are confirmed by the Cabinet Office's latest six-month report on diversity in the civil service.

In October 2002, the percentage of minority ethnic staff at senior civil service (SCS) level was 2.8 per cent, while that for disabled staff has languished at 1.7.

Meanwhile the target has remained at a paltry – but seemingly unobtainable – three per cent for the last four years. (In comparison, the percentage of working age people with a disability is 20 per cent.)

The report claims "long-term progress" in tackling under-representation of women and minority ethnic staff at SCS level, but says "data on staff with disabilities at SCS level indicates that considerable challenges remain".

The government does at least know it has a problem. At the start of the year it set up a Cabinet Office Disability Working Group to address not just the issue of the low percentage of disabled civil service staff, but the problems with collecting data on the subject – something the blank spaces in our table illustrate.

According to a Cabinet Office spokesperson, the government is "committed to making the Civil Service more reflective of the communities" it serves and claims 3.6 per cent of staff overall are disabled.

As well as the bursary scheme, the Cabinet Office provides training for disabled people to become disability champions within their departments.

It remains to be seen whether the government takes the opportunity presented by the new disability working group to bring about real change.

But, unfortunately, by its second meeting, discussions about an event to highlight the group's work had been dropped; the Cabinet Office couldn't afford it.

DN 2003 EMPLOYMENT SURVEY Government departments	Number of employees [2001 figure]	% of staff who are disabled [2001 figure]	% of line managers who are disabled [2001 figure]	% of middle managers who have a disability [2001 figure]	% of senior managers who are disabled [2001 figure]	% of senior Civil Service staff with a disability [2001 figure]	Number of staff who left in the past two years on grounds of ill health/disability [2001 figure]	Do you guarantee interviews to suitably qualified disabled applicants?
Customs and Excise	23,412 [23,358]	4.2 [4.2]	3.2 [3.29]	2.5 [3.05]	2.2 [2.35]	2.8 [1.0]	58 [5.2%]	Yes
Department for Education and Skills	5,000 [4,210]	4.9 [5.7]	-- [6.4]	-- [5.6]	-- [3.8]	2.5 [1.0]	-- [5.7%]	Yes
Department of Health	5,240 [4,977]	4 [5.4]	-- [5.3]	-- [4.65]	-- [3.8]	1.5 [3.0]	-- [1.6%]	Yes
Department for Transport (previously Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions)	4,550 [4,122]	2.4 [2.5]	-- [3.5]	-- [2.2]	-- [1.6]	1.1 [0]	-- [3.3%]	Yes
Department for Work and Pensions	137,466 [88,410]	5.2 [4.9]	6.1 [2.19]	3.7 [5.06]	3.7 [4.66]	-- [5.3]	Not available [1,058]	"We use the two-tick symbol"
Home Office	18,893 [13,224]	2.5 [2.3]	-- [--]	2.1 [--]	0 [--]	1.7 [--]	67 [--]	Yes
Inland Revenue	78,546 [64,833]	-- [4.3]	-- [3.7]	-- [3.2]	-- [4.1]	-- [2.6]	--	Yes – "We use the two- tick symbol"
Lord Chancellor's Office	11,944 [11,230]	3.7 [3.52]	6.6 [5.22]	1.8 [1.88]	2 [2.94]	2.8 [3.51]	-- [2.59%]	"We use the two-tick symbol"
Ministry of Defence	[100,000] [100,000]	7.9 [6]	-- [5.3]	-- [4.6]	-- [2.4]	-- [1.3]	-- [1.07%]	--
Northern Ireland Office	1,646 [1,632]	4.3 [4.3]	4 [4]	3.9 [5.5]	4.4 [5.0]	2 [2.3]	17 [8]	No
Scottish Executive	4,330 [6,000]	2.6 [2.6]	0 [0]	-- [2.2]	-- [1.1]	0.6 [2.1]	-- [--]	--





On track: wheelchair athlete Jason Richards has been named Disabled Sportsman of the Year in the npower Active Sports Awards, organised by the Federation of Disability Sports Organisations. In the last year, he won the 100m, 200m, 400m and 800m events at the HSA Healthcare British National Championships, competed in the World Triathlon Championships in Mexico and won the Bedford Olympic Triathlon. His goal is to represent Britain at the 2004 Paralympics in Athens.

### Correction

In last month's London Marathon review, due to inaccurate information supplied to DN, we reported that Shelly Woods finished second in the mini wheelchair race for under 18s. In fact, second place went to Brian Alldis and Shelly finished third.

# FA cash boost

Disabled footballers will be playing in more national and regional competitions over the next few years as a result of a cash boost from the Football Association (FA).

The FA is investing £600,000 over the next three years to increase the number of disabled people who play football, raise the profile of disabled football and improve the standard of coaching.

The money will be split between professional football clubs' community schemes,

grass roots coaching and regional coaching centres.

The scheme includes a target to increase the number of coaches for disabled players from 500 to at least 1,000.

The FA also hopes to increase the number of regional coaching centres from 17 to 43 by 2006.

FA spokesman Alex Stone said: "Irrespective of where you are across the country there will be an opportunity for you."

This summer the FA will hold eight pan-disability regional football festivals, with

a national final.

The FA has already announced plans to set up an amputee league next season (DN May).

If you would like more information about playing, coaching or refereeing, contact the FA on 020 7745 4596.

The FA is also producing a newsletter for disabled supporters ahead of England matches, giving information about tickets and facilities. For more information contact: [info@thefa.com](mailto:info@thefa.com)

# Nationals make man of Mistry

Britain's wheelchair tennis No 1 Jayant Mistry won his tenth national title at the 2003 National Wheelchair Tennis Championships in Gloucester.

Mistry beat Kevin Plowman 6-2, 6-4 in the men's main draw singles final in May.

Plowman started off well, taking an early 2-1 lead before Mistry won five games in a row to secure the first set. The second set was closer, but Mistry maintained his record of not having dropped a set to another British player since 1995.

He said: "I am delighted to have won my tenth national title, as I think it will be a long

time before anybody is able to match that record."

Mistry is ranked ninth in the world but is now aiming to reach the top five by the end of the year. This would improve his chances at Athens 2004.

In the women's main draw singles final, second seed Kay Forshaw won her first national title with a 6-2, 7-5 victory over British No 1 and six times national champion Janet McMorran.

In the quadriplegic event, Mark Eccleston beat defending champion Peter Norfolk to win his seventh national quad singles title.





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## Howzatt! First ever Cricket Awards seek UK best



A new national awards scheme aims to raise the profile of disabled cricket across the UK.

The Disabled Cricketer of the Year Awards, run by *Cricket World Magazine* in conjunction with DN, will be divided into three categories, covering Disabled, Blind and Deaf cricket.

The disabled category includes people with physical and learning disabilities.

For each category there are bowling, batting, fielding and special achievement awards.

James Rosedale, who has MS, and is manager of Yorkshire county disabled cricket team, said raising awareness "means everything" to the players.

"Disabled cricket is hardly given a mention. The awards will make an enormous difference," he said.

The awards are being launched on 29 May and entries should be in by September. The awards ceremony will be held in November.

Entry forms can either be downloaded from [www.cricketworld.com](http://www.cricketworld.com), or ordered by phoning 01476 561944. Winners will receive a trophy and cricket equipment and runners-up will receive a medal and cricket equipment.



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## Convertible cool

Janna Callan had a good time while taking the new Ford Streetka out for a ride

Over May Bank Holiday weekend, I had the chance to test-drive the new convertible Ford Streetka.

Its external appearance impressed me immediately: very sporty and stylish. But my excitement was tinged with apprehension because it was a manual car and I am mainly used to driving automatics.

After a few manoeuvres to familiarize myself with the controls, I set off in the rain, lamenting the weather, which looked so settled that I reconciled myself to not taking the roof down over the weekend! With daylight fading, I entered the pre-Bank Holiday traffic, and quickly established that the car handled rain very well.

From the moment I took the wheel, I felt at home in the comfortable and luxurious two-seat cockpit. The black leather seats were complimented by a high quality interior trim and the retro style aluminium gearshift fell comfortably to hand. Access into the car is fairly low, but the seats are height adjustable.

The dashboard is clearly arranged, with everything visible. The Streetka also has a host of standard features, like double airbags and electric windows on both sides, which would often come as extras, even on more expensive cars.

The engine was lively and I had the feeling that there was plenty more to come if needed. Despite my lack of experience with a manual gearbox, the clutch and positive gear selection quickly made me feel comfortable, and my trepidation disappeared.

In general, the visibility of the Streetka is excellent. But because of the rain, the rear window misted up, so I had to rely on the wing mirrors. Perhaps the air-conditioning could have overcome this.

On my second day of test-driving, I awoke to bright sunshine and could hardly wait to try the delights of a



PAUL STEWART-REED

Rain or shine: the Streetka's interior (above) is clearly designed, while the exterior (below) gets you noticed

convertible. The roof was quick and easy to adjust, taking less than a minute to pull down.

The Streetka is ideal for town and city driving because it is so light and compact. At only 3,650mm in length, parking is no problem and the boot, while narrow, is deep enough to take a reasonable amount of luggage or shopping. However, there is little spare room inside the car, other than a very small glove box for personal items and a lockable compartment behind the seats large enough for a wallet or a few CDs.

Access to the boot is secure and can only be gained through the use of a remote key, which at times was awkward.

The Streetka has excellent

road holding, and the steering is extremely light and responsive. Driving on country roads was a pleasure and the aerodynamic styling made high-speed main road motoring both quiet and tireless. The power-to-weight ratio made hill starts easy on any gradient and produced really quick acceleration for overtaking.

It might not be the most versatile transport, but if you are after something that will turn heads and is fun to drive, this could be the Ka for you.

*The Streetka is priced at £12,495, or £13,745 for the luxury model. It is not available through Motability's car lease scheme, but the original Ka is.*

Janna Callan is on Scope's Fast Track training scheme, and currently works at Sainsbury's business centre in London.



LAURY CALLAN

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# A year in gear

David Jamieson MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport, talks about the changes that have affected disabled motorists and travellers in the past year

In the past year we have been busy delivering the government's long-standing commitment to improve life for disabled people.

One important development has been the outcome of the Blue Badge review. There is a clear dedication from the government to make changes that crack down on badge abuse more effectively and ensure that badges are only issued to those who need them most. I know from *DN's* postbag – and my own – how strongly many disabled people feel on these issues.

**'There is a clear commitment to crack down on badge abuse more effectively and ensure that badges are only issued to those who need them most'**

We have also been pleased to support the excellent Baywatch campaign to tackle abuse of Blue Badge parking in supermarkets. I hope our financial contribution to the campaign will help find good solutions that can be put into practice around the country.

Our announcement, just

before Christmas, of substantial additional funding for mobility centres was also a welcome development. These centres deliver an invaluable service to many disabled drivers, and I am keen to see that the same level of professional advice and facilities to try out vehicles and adaptations is available everywhere. As we see the numbers of older people in the population increase significantly in the coming years, there will be a growing need for centres of this kind that can offer advice and support to help people stay independently mobile for as

long as possible.

There have also been developments in accessible public transport. The numbers of buses and trains that are now fully accessible (and which comply with the regulations we have set under the Disability Discrimination Act) has increased significantly. On

coaches, we have been working with National Express to run a fully wheelchair accessible service on the route between London and Bath, via Heathrow. The trial will help the industry to learn important lessons about operating a fully accessible service, for example, booking arrangements for wheelchair users, before the requirement we have made for all new coaches to be accessible comes into effect in 2005.

We have also consulted disabled people and the transport industries about extending the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) to ensure that transport providers cannot discriminate against disabled people in the services and facilities they provide. This will be an important addition to disabled people's civil rights in relation to transport.

Another small but very welcome development this year has been the passing into law of a bill which ensures that private hire vehicles (minicabs) will no longer be able to refuse to carry passengers accompanied by assistance dogs. We had



already introduced a law to protect disabled people using licensed taxis, but it was clear that there were still major problems for many people who were refused bookings in minicabs if they were travelling with guide dogs.

Finally, there has also been a lot of activity in the aviation field, both at domestic and international levels. We have been leading discussions in Europe to ensure that airlines cannot pass the cost of assistance in an airport directly to the disabled passenger. While the vast majority of airlines do not do so, there have been some worrying examples among low-cost carriers of discrimination against those who need assistance. The European Commission will be bringing forward legislation later this year to make sure that the practice is outlawed across Europe.

In the last few weeks, we have also published a comprehensive *Code of Practice on Access to Air Travel* for disabled people.

This code, which has been drawn up with major input from disabled people and endorsed by all the key industry organisations, sets out best practice in meeting the needs of disabled travellers, both at the airport and on board the airline. In parallel, our advisers DPTAC (the Disabled Persons' Transport Advisory Committee) have published guidance to help disabled people who are first-time or infrequent flyers know what to expect and how to prepare for a flight.

We have pledged to take legal powers to bring aviation into the scope of the DDA if the voluntary agreement set out in the code does not deliver the level of improvement that disabled people need.

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Citroen Dispatch, 1.9 litre diesel, X reg, February 2001, red, 10,000 miles, lightweight ramp, lowering rear floor, 4 seats, £11,250.

Renault Trafic, 2.2 litre petrol, P reg, November 1996, green, full width ramp, 5 seats. £3,995.

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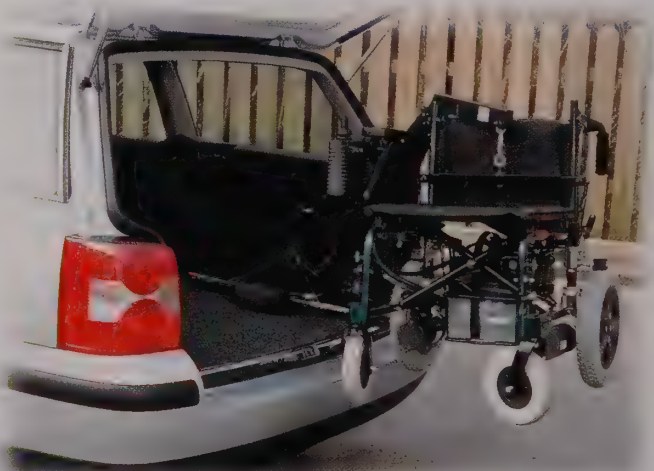
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# Driving takes its toll

If you're having trouble finding the money to run your car, you're not alone. Ed Passant investigates what's going on, and what needs to be done

**N**o savings? Have you gone through the latest Motability price lists to see what lump of gleaming chrome and leather (or, more realistically, plastic and velour trim), you can afford by simply using your higher rate mobility component or war pensioners' mobility supplement?

It's not an activity to while away the hours, is it? The number of models you can obtain without an advance payment has plummeted in the last couple of years.

If you're a private car owner, have you had a recent maintenance or insurance bill? Perhaps you've found that worrying about meeting costs takes more than a few seconds –

discounts, so they, and their customers, haven't benefited from the fall in new car prices.

Actually, they've taken a drubbing because the restructuring of car prices created other side effects. Since 1997, the value of a three-year-old car has fallen by £1,000. This means they get £1,000 less when they dispose of a car at the end of a lease.

Also, the market price of comprehensive insurance has risen by £200 per year (or £600 over a standard 3-year lease) since 1997. This effectively means a total increased cost of £1,600 per lease (£10.25 a week), which has to be passed onto the customer.

The problems this causes are

March 2000, there were nearly 400 model variants available; by March 2003, there were 41.

And forget about finding an automatic at that price.

But in spite of the restrictions at this price level, a staggering 16 per cent of all new agreements were for this tiny band of vehicles. This isn't about choice; it's about the economic realities many disabled people face. To complete the picture, remember that Motability don't pay for fuel. And if you need adaptations, that's extra as well.

So, are any disabled people gaining from the current state of the market? It's difficult to find them. The fall in used car prices may have benefited some, but the vehicles they are replacing have been similarly devalued. A disabled person buying a new car privately will have done reasonably well, particularly if they are among the group of wheelchair users who can claim exemption from VAT on vehicle purchase and maintenance.

Sadly, this represents a small minority of disabled people feeling the squeeze. Compare the increases in relevant benefits with spiraling vehicle-running costs from 1998 to 2002. Higher



rate mobility component increased by £3.45 – that is, by less than 10 per cent. Vehicle maintenance increased by 27 per cent, petrol and oil by 19 per cent, tax and insurance by 41 per cent. If you are a disabled motorist, it may be worth asking exactly what component of mobility these miserly benefit increases are supposed to cover.

What is to be done? A starting point, though it won't help those who do not qualify for the benefit in the first place, would be to convince the government that higher rate mobility components should be increased in line with the cost of motoring, not simply overall inflation figures.

Another route may be to subsidise certain motoring costs for disabled people, in the same way as fuel is subsidised in the

south of Ireland. However, the Chancellor is unlikely to say "yes" to that.

Nevertheless, increasing information on the hardship experienced, from the Disabled Drivers' Motor Club (DDMC) survey two years ago to the worrying figures from Motability today, suggest that something must be done.

The DDMC has announced a "Keep Me Mobile" Campaign, but we are not arrogant enough to think we can achieve change on our own. I hope other organisations and individuals will make their voices heard to ensure that more disabled people, not less, get the opportunity to experience independent personal mobility. *Ed Passant is chief executive of the Disabled Drivers' Motor Club.*

**'A starting point would be to convince the government that higher rate mobility components should be increased in line with the cost of motoring'**

it can feel like a full-time activity.

What's going on with the cost of personal mobility?

If you believe government statistics (and this is raw rather than "spun" data), the cost of motoring increased by just under 38 per cent between 1991 and 2002. The index of all items increased by around 32 per cent over the same period, which would suggest the situation isn't that bad. If the overall cost of motoring hasn't gone up by much more than a relatively low rate of inflation, what is causing the grief?

As always, the devil is in the detail. Astonishingly, the cost of new vehicles has fallen by 0.6 per cent over this period, which distorts the real picture. Other costs have risen dramatically. Petrol and oil have increased by 67 per cent, tax and insurance by 89 per cent and maintenance by 63 per cent. So, unless you were in the enviable position of benefiting from the fall in car prices, you've taken a hammering by running your car.

The largest group of disabled people who drive new vehicles are Motability customers, but the feedback from there isn't rosy. Motability have made a series of dynamic changes to deliver clear benefits to scheme users, but even a multi-million pound scheme like theirs can't hide from economic realities.

They admit they are in danger of feeling the pinch for a number of reasons. They have always had access to large fleet

most visible when looking at the number of model variants (remember, there are wide variations for each basic car) that are available with no advance payment on the Motability scheme. The advance payment is the money you shell out over and above your higher-rate mobility component. In

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# Gear up for the roadshow

DN's motoring correspondent, Douglas Campbell, gives you a taste of the goodies in store at this year's Mobility Roadshow

**C**ars, cars and more cars. What's more, some are truly new and at least two will be seen in public in the UK for the very first time at the Mobility Roadshow.

The Ford Focus C-MAX was launched at the Geneva Motor Show in March and is not yet in our showrooms. It extends Britain's best-selling Focus range into the MAV (Multi-Activity Vehicle) sector. MAGIC (Mobility and General Information Centre), Ford's information service for people with disabilities and mature drivers, will showcase the vehicle on the Ford stand.

Focus C-MAX is targeted at customers who want a five-seat family car with flexible seating to provide even more room with two adults in the back seats.

The Focus C-Max will be available on the Motability Contract Hire Scheme towards the end of 2003. It comes with an impressive package of features that may be attractive to many disabled people. Ford is on trackside stands 4 and 5.

Also new is the Vexel Quovis, which has just arrived from Spain. This is Europe's first purpose-built car that can be driven from a wheelchair. More than 110 have already been sold in Spain and the UK is the second country to offer the car. Access is via a rear ramp, which, like the door, is powered for ease of use and operated with a remote control. Powered by a tiny diesel engine with very responsive controls, this car could be ideal for journeys in town or in the country. Prices have yet to be announced, but it is certain to be much less expensive than any other drive-from-wheelchair car or van. Vexel is on stand D37 and will be sharing space with the Jubilee Automotive Group on trackside stand 7. We hope to bring you a full road test report very soon.

As if that was not enough, Volkswagen will launch a new compact MPV, the Touran, on trackside stands 8 and 9.

This must be the year of the smaller MPV, as Vauxhall will show their new Meriva on

trackside stand 1 (see "Road test," page VI).

Other major manufacturers at the show include Toyota (trackside stands 2 and 3), Nissan (trackside stands 5 and 6), Renault (trackside stands 9 and 10) and Peugeot (trackside stands 11 and 12).

All the trackside stands will offer test drives for both disabled drivers and passengers on the famous Donington Park racetrack. To register, go to the test drive control desk near the main reception point at the western end of the main exhibition hall before booking at the manufacturer's stand. You can pre-register online at [www.showdata.com/mobility](http://www.showdata.com/mobility). You need to bring your driving licence with you.

There is a lot more to the Roadshow than cars. There are companies that supply simple adaptations and those that do complex conversions; companies that supply hoists, and companies that convert vehicles to carry disabled people in their wheelchairs as passengers or drivers. There are wheelchair companies and lots of other aids.

Many charities and clubs offer advice on disability issues. Motability will be there to answer questions about their schemes. And if you have a tricky question, you can be pretty sure the people from The Disabled Drivers' Association (stand A8) and The Disabled Drivers' Motor Club (stand D29) will know the answer, or tell you who the expert is. DN will also be there, on stand A26.

Among other new products at the Roadshow are -



The VW Touran and DN will both be at the Roadshow this year, looking forward to seeing you.

- A supermarket trolley for wheelchair users with a spinning basket from ASDA (stand C20).
- New suitcase ramps with an integrated non-slip surface and comfortable carrying handles at Access Ramps (stand C30).
- A transfer hoist to move people from wheelchair to vehicle, as well as placing the wheelchair in the back of the vehicle, at Brig Ayd Controls (outside stand OS42).
- New scooter ranges, including a new power folder scooter at Electric Mobility (stand A22).
- The Mini Crosser range of scooters from Scandinavia, with different options, at EV Technology (outside stand OS52).



- A portable transfer system, the Get-U-Out, from Mangar (outside stand OS20).
- Specially-designed wheelchair bags, which are bright and colourful as well as very practical, from Globaleather (stand A37).
- A new lifestyle electric wheelchair at Steering Developments (stand C8).

## GETTING TO THE ROADSHOW

Donington Park is almost next door to East Midlands Airport and a short distance from junctions 23A and 24 on the M1 motorway. Just follow the signs to the airport until you see the brown tourist signs for Donington Park. An accessible shuttle bus service from Derby railway station will run hourly from 9.15am to 1.15pm each day, with return services in the afternoon.

The Roadshow is open from 10am to 5pm from Thursday 12 June to Saturday 14 June. It is *not* open on Sunday. Admission and parking are free. All the family is welcome with lots to do for all ages as well as entertainment, crèche and a food court. Visitors to the Mobility Roadshow can pre-book wheelchairs and scooters with Keep Able and ASDA. Full details and a booking form can be obtained from Jackie James on 01384 48 45 44.

For further information, visit [www.justmotobility.co.uk/roadshow](http://www.justmotobility.co.uk/roadshow) or tel: 0870 770 3222.

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# Victory for Vauxhall

With the arrival of the new Meriva, Vauxhall now enters the market of small multi-purpose vehicles. Mike Rogers sees how it stands up to the competition

**T**his month, Vauxhall's new Mini-MPV (multi-purpose vehicle), the Meriva, arrives in the show-rooms and on the road.

The company's bigger MPV, the Zafira, has been around for a few years now and is popular, particularly for its unique fold-flat rear seat storage system. But the Meriva takes Vauxhall into the ever-growing Mini-MPV market slot to compete with a range of other makes, including Ford's new Fusion, which effectively is an enlarged Fiesta. In a similar way, the Meriva is an enlarged Corsa that combines elements from the company's larger Astra and Vectra models.

Will it be a success? Having just tested one, I believe it will – and also a success with the big disabled motorist market. It's too early yet to know how Motability will rate it, but I have little doubt it will feature soon on their contract hire scheme.

Vauxhall emphasises the Meriva's "crisp, sharp lines" and certainly it is a good looker. It's an outwardly

compact little vehicle, yet once you are seated inside, it seems spacious – rather like Dr Who's police box, Tardis! In fact, it has a little more head height than its big brother, Zafira. The "little big car" effect is gained by the Meriva's long wheelbase with short body overhang.

I tested the entry model with a 1.6 8-valve engine that produces a useful 78 bhp. Above that, on offer are two other petrol engines, a 1.6 16-valver and a 1.8, which pushes out 100bhp. Later in the summer, a 1.7 diesel engine will be added and also an "easytronic" clutchless transmission system – where you have no clutch panel but still use the gear shift normally while the changing is done automatically.

This compromise between manual and automatic transmission can be quite attractive and well worth considering by drivers with left leg problems – which includes me with my artificial left leg.

Entering the car is easy with the high door heights. And,



DAVID HERRING

The Meriva's engine rides somewhere "between sporty and soft", while the high-set rear lights (below, left) offer extra protection on motorways.

once in, the driving seat is comfortable and supportive with full adjustment. All the controls come easily to hand and foot, although the electric front window switches on the door are a little too far aft for easy operation. All the controls will be familiar to anyone who knows the modern Corsa.

As Vauxhall says, once in the car, the high-seating positions add to the "room with a view" feeling, and most disabled – and, even more, elderly – motorists prefer high seating.

The rear seats offer another unique feature. The car can be transformed from a five-seater to a four-seater to a one-seater without removing any seats. The rear seat comprises three units with a 40-20-40 split, unlike the 60-40 on most cars. There are two broad rear seats, and a narrower one between them, which can be folded away. With that done, the two outer seats can be slid inwards to give more elbowroom, and there's fore and aft adjustment as well. Versatile indeed!

The boot space is capacious with a useful low-loading sill, which can all be added to by playing about with the rear seat, as stated earlier.

The Meriva is a rewarding

car to drive. Even this entry model with its 1.6 8-valve engine gives a satisfying performance and the ride is a good compromise between sporty and soft. It handles very well if cornered fast and will cruise happily all day on major roads at 70 mph. On undulating B-roads, the ride is a little jiggly, but quite acceptable.

Vision all around is excellent, although a little restricted on bends by thick A-pillars each side of the windscreen. At night, the Halogen headlamps give a good feeling of security, added to by high-set rear lights –

and the stated combined mpg figure is 36.2, which is not at all bad for a Mini-MPV.

As I always do, I took the car across country for my race-engineer colleague, Bill Blydenstein, to sample. He was very impressed and said he wouldn't mind one for himself, but Bill has a soft spot for Vauxhalls. After all, it was he, with his specialised engine work, who took the company into Motor sport in the 1960s when he ran DTV – Dealer Team Vauxhall – in road racing and rallying. Today, he runs a couple of Corsas of his own.

However, praise from

**'It's too early yet to know how Motability will rate it, but I have little doubt it will feature soon on their contract hire scheme'**

always a comforting factor on motorways.

Although its kerb weight is about a tonne and a quarter, even with the little 1.6 engine, an acceleration of 0-60 mph can be achieved in 14 seconds

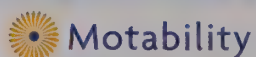
a meticulous engineer is worthwhile indeed and says a lot for the Meriva. We both believe it will have a great future. *On the road prices for the Meriva range from £10,995-£13,495.*

**Vauxhall is offering disabled customers and their families at the Mobility Roadshow a special discount, worth about £350-£450, on the basic price of the Meriva, and also free metallic and pearlescent paint, worth £300. Trackside Stand 1.**



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Technology is moving at a much increased pace and even the most experienced veterans have difficulty keeping up with the latest on offer. This is why at Bekker's we feel the products need an all year round display and trying-out facility, rather than a bi-annual mobility roadshow. In May this year we made Alfred Bekker an employees' owned and run company to move with the times and pave an even better way for innovations and after sales service. We also completed our new premises, incorporating a large showroom, modern workshops and precision engineering facilities. Not forgetting very comfortable wheelchair friendly Motel facilities to enable our customers to road test vehicles, evaluate and try out equipment, scooters, wheelchairs etc. at their leisure, without pressure and having ample time getting the feel of things, to reach the right choice. We will be updating our Website on a regular basis to keep you informed of all our products. At the same time, we are here to assist you and we are only too pleased to design one off products for persons with a special need. Below is a selection of a new range of products we manufacture and we very much look forward to welcoming you as a customer.

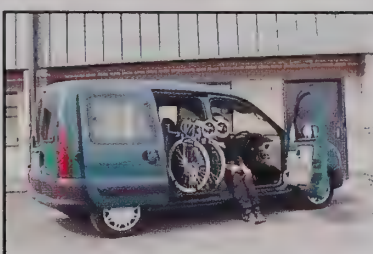
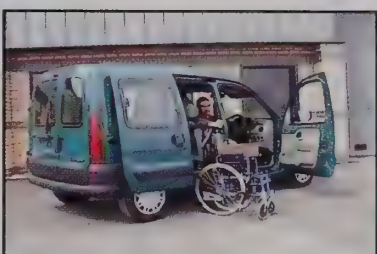


The Chrysler Grand Voyager with a 10" dropped floor, auto door and folding ramp providing wheelchair seated side entrance for front passenger or driver station, with options of a 6-way electric transfer seat, change over seats, drive in wheelchair tie-down and from simple push/pull hand controls to the latest hi-tech drive by wire and zero effort horizontal steering.



The Chrysler Voyager or Grand Voyager rear entry vehicle with enough room for wheelchair seated and four other passengers and driver, or vehicle can be changed back into a seven seater within minutes.

An easy folding manual or electric ramp and the wheel-in wheelchair tie down with a 3 point inertia seatbelt or harness makes this the most practical solution. Conversion is also very suitable to take any unoccupied scooter.



The self drive auto Kangoo with hand controls and manual wheelchair loader makes life easy for the double leg disabled leaving his or her hands clean. The Kangoo can be quickly re-converted into a five seater making it the ideal get to work independently and weekend family vehicle.

The five seater Kangoo can be quickly changed into a rear entry wheelchair seated passenger or unoccupied scooter and still room for two able bodied passengers plus the driver.



An economically priced dual power scooter lift for side entry in the Chrysler Voyager or similar. The power lift raises the scooter vertically until level with the vehicle side entrance door, then retracts into the van and automatically shuts off when in the travel position. No holes have to be drilled as the lift is secured using the vehicles seat tracks.



Inside Van Lift

The bargain basement dual power scooter or electric wheelchair lift for rear entry, the cost of which is often less than the money saved on the VAT element.

Can be quickly transferred to a replacement vehicle at little cost and without any drilling of holes.



The flip up flip down towbar mounted outside lift can accommodate three or four wheeled scooters or four wheeled chairs. It is ideal to fit to 4-wheel drive vehicles and could also be used for carrying bales of straw and so forth.



Handy-lift

Then there is the handy-lift for use on caravans and other vehicles where steps may pose a problem. The lift platform raises vertically and locks away for travelling. There is even an emergency crank handle in case of battery failure.

### Scooters

Alfred Bekker supply a wide range of scooters. Prices start from £495 and are available from stock. See website for current offers.



### Wheelchairs

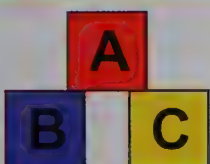
Alfred Bekker also supply a wide range of manual and electric wheelchairs from stock. With prices starting from as little as £178. See website for current offers.



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Last but not least our range of hand controls which are the most copied and, although one manufacturer names his cloned ones the best, Bekker controls have never been equalled. They are manufactured to aircraft standards and are guaranteed for the motor vehicles lifetime. Our wide range offers solutions for almost all disability combinations. For help and guidance selecting the correct controls, please look at the website or contact us.

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# Before you take the keys...



So you're a wheelchair user and you're after a car. But how many doors do you need, what access options do you have, what accessories are available and more importantly – what gizmos can you expect? Let Douglas Campbell be your guide

It would appear to be pretty straight forward choosing a car. Saloon, hatchback, estate, MPV or 4x4? Small, medium or large? Two-door or four-door? Petrol, diesel or even LPG? Large engine or small engine? And, most importantly: which colour and which extras?

But if you use a wheelchair, there are other important aspects to think about. There is no simple answer to the deceptively straightforward

least stand? If so, can they lift the wheelchair? What sort of wheelchair? How dextrous are they? Are they the driver or a passenger?

So where do we start?

If you have no real ability to stand, let alone walk, you will need to be able to transfer from the wheelchair onto the car seat. Then, if you are to be the driver, you need to be able to load the wheelchair without help. Some people solve this by entering the car from the

folded or dismantled wheelchair over onto the other seat. Some, myself included, use a motorised roof rack, mounted inside a roof box, to load the folded wheelchair onto the roof of my four-year-old Vauxhall Corsa (*see right*). None of these techniques are easy and some are really quite difficult. It will depend on the extent and nature of your disability as to whether you can use any of them. The design of the car also makes a huge difference.

If you can stand, but not really walk, you may be able to lift the wheelchair onto the back seat of the car, while holding the open door.

If you can walk a little, you may be able to use the rear of the car to store the chair.

If lifting the wheelchair into the boot or hatchback is not



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possible, you may require a simple hoist to do the lifting, while you guide the wheelchair into place. Remember, though, that on modern cars there is often nothing to hold onto when walking down the side of the car.

If none of these will work safely and comfortably, you may need to consider driving from your wheelchair. Traditionally this has been a very expensive solution, as the only cars available were converted from van type vehicles, with lifts and complex

equipment to anchor the wheelchair. But recently Jubilee Automotive Group has introduced a lower cost solution, the Suzuki Life (*see page IX*). Even newer is the single seat Vexel Quovis. Both can be seen at this month's Mobility Roadshow.

Driving from a wheelchair is not ideal, as wheelchairs are not designed to be used as driving seats and lack the comfort and safety features of the modern car seat. Some people choose to transfer from their wheelchair to a driving

*'By now you are probably thinking of giving up! There is, however, a wealth of knowledge and advice available.'*

question: "Which car do you recommend for a wheelchair user?" Unfortunately it all depends on a host of differing circumstances. Can the wheelchair user walk, or at

passenger side, then climbing across to the driver's side, dragging the folded or dismantled wheelchair behind them. Some climb in on the driver's side and then lift the

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So, whatever your individual needs, we can help get you mobile. We may not be the biggest, but we are the best at what we do.

For advice on a suitable vehicle, please visit Aspect Conversions at the Mobility Roadshow at Donnington, stand OS41 & 46 on the 12 – 14th June. Alternatively give us a call on 01704 546600 or visit our website [www.aspectconversions.co.uk](http://www.aspectconversions.co.uk)

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seat from inside a lift equipped, van-type conversion.

Remember, too, that when planning where the wheelchair will go, you also need to allow space for passengers, mobility or medical necessities, luggage and shopping.

Once you have decided how you are going to get in and out of the car and where the wheelchair will go, you can start looking for a car.

The amount of space in similar size cars of different makes can vary enormously. When you have picked a shortlist, you should try getting in and out of them and then try loading your wheelchair into them. Will it work? Is it so difficult that in reality you will find it too difficult for regular use?

Remember that cars with only one door on each side will usually have much larger doors and more space for getting in and out. Remember, too, that larger doors need more space when open and can be difficult to open and close, especially on a windy day.

Some car upholstery is very plush, but this may make sliding in and out much more difficult. A sliding board can sometimes help here.

Watch out for grab handles above doors that are not strong enough to take your weight if you pull on them. They are not generally designed to take heavier weights.

At the rear of the car you may find that there is a high threshold to lift a wheelchair, or shopping, over. Not every car is like this and some have almost flat floors opening directly onto the rear bumper.

Think too about where you will be parking the car. Is there enough space to park it and to fully open any doors that you will have to use? If you park on a slope, will you still be able to manage getting in and out? If you have a garage or carport, is there enough headroom for the car and any roof box?

You also need to know whether the adaptations and equipment you require can be fitted on the car you choose. For example, the roof of some cars is not strong enough to take a roof box and wheelchair, and hoists fit the rear of some cars better than others.

By now you are probably thinking of giving up! There is, however, a wealth of knowledge and advice available. Talk to the adaptations specialists about what they can and cannot do. Get specialist advice from the staff at a mobility centre where all of the problems outlined can be discussed and sorted out without the pressure of any sales people. Join The Disabled

Drivers' Association or The Disabled Drivers' Motor Club, where lots of practical advice is made available to members. Also, visit the Mobility Roadshow to see what is available and to try getting in and out of lots of different cars.

When you have all that sorted out you're ready for the trickiest decision: what colour is your new car going to be? And also, how about adding that CD-player with the multi-changer too?



## To find out more

Contact details and Mobility Roadshow stand numbers for sources of advice mentioned:

- Jubilee Automotive Group, will be showing both the Suzuki Life and the Vexel Quovis on trackside stand 7, tel: 0121 502 2252
- Vexel Quovis, stand D37, tel: 00 34 91 5152052 (overseas)
- Forum of Mobility Centres, stand C29, and see page X

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# Focus on forums

There are 15 mobility centres in the UK offering help to disabled motorists. John Hunter explains what they do

**T**he Forum of Mobility Centres is a network of organisations that aims to help older and disabled people achieve or maintain independent outdoor mobility as drivers, passengers and wheelchair users.

You can contact a centre yourself or be referred by others, such as a doctor, social worker or voluntary organisation. All the centres provide a free information service, but you will have to pay £40-£130 for an assessment, depending on location. In

for demonstration, assessment and tuition from Vauxhall, Ford, Fiat, Nissan and Renault, and free or discounted equipment from a wide range of adaptation companies.

For the past three years, the Department for Transport (DfT) and the Department of Health have given ten accredited English centres grants totalling about £450,000 a year and contributed to the cost of a business manager for the Forum.

Last December, the DfT announced an extra £2m a year



Scotland and two in Wales – will get similar funding from their devolved governments.

The Forum is very keen to expand its service and encourage the development of new centres to fill geographical gaps and meet client needs.

Further work needs to be done, but it is conservatively estimated that, in eight years' time, there will be 25,000 assessment clients a year needing, perhaps, another ten centres.

This will require a significant increase in government funding. *Dr John Hunter is chief executive of the Forum of Mobility Centres.*

**'The Forum is very keen to expand its service and encourage the development of new centres to fill geographical gaps and meet client needs'**

Scotland and for some people in South Wales (but not North Wales) assessments are free through your GP or consultant.

Driving tuition is available in some centres.

Currently, there are 15 centres answering 45,000 telephone enquiries a year and providing over 5,300 assessments of clients' needs.

They have had very generous support in the form of loan cars

for the English mobility centres (except its Mobility Advice and Vehicle Information Service). The extra funding, from April 2003, will give the centres much-needed financial security and allow them to increase staff, reduce waiting lists for assessments and improve services generally.

We hope that the other four accredited centres – one in Northern Ireland, one in

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## Find a forum near you

**1. Cornwall Mobility Centre**, Tehidy House, Royal Cornwall Hospital, Truro, Cornwall TR1 3LJ, tel: 01872 254920, fax: 01872 254921. email: [mobility@rcht.swest.nhs.uk](mailto:mobility@rcht.swest.nhs.uk) web: [www.cornwall-homepage.co.uk/homepages/mobile/](http://www.cornwall-homepage.co.uk/homepages/mobile/)

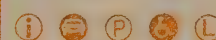


(also does wheelchair repairs, independent living and drop-in centre)

**2. Derby Regional Mobility Centre**, Kingsway Hospital, Kingsway, Derby DE22 3LZ, tel: 01332 371929, fax: 01332 382377. email: [info@derbyregionalmobilitycentre.co.uk](mailto:info@derbyregionalmobilitycentre.co.uk) web: [www.derbyregionalmobilitycentre.co.uk](http://www.derbyregionalmobilitycentre.co.uk)



**3. Kilverstone Mobility Assessment Centre**, 2 Napier Place, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 3RL, tel: 01842 753029, fax: 01842 755950. email: [mail@kmacmobil.org.uk](mailto:mail@kmacmobil.org.uk) web: [www.kmacmobil.org.uk](http://www.kmacmobil.org.uk)



**4. Mobility Advice and Vehicle Information Service (MAVIS)**, "O" Wing, Macadam Avenue, Old Wokingham, Road, Crowthorne, Berks RG45 6XD, tel: 01344 661000, fax: 01344 661066. email: [mavis@dft.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:mavis@dft.gsi.gov.uk) web: [www.mobility-unit.dft.gov.uk/mavis.htm](http://www.mobility-unit.dft.gov.uk/mavis.htm)



**5. Mobility Centre**, Regional Neurological Rehabilitation Centre, Hunters Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 4NR, tel: 0191 219 5694, fax: 0191 219 5665. web: [www.nap.nhs.uk/snrs/](http://www.nap.nhs.uk/snrs/)



**6. Mobility Service of the Disabled Living Centre (West of England)**, The Vassall Centre, Gill Avenue, Fishponds, Bristol BS16 2QQ, tel: 0117 965 9353, fax: 0117 965 3652, email: [mobserv@dlcbristol.org](mailto:mobserv@dlcbristol.org)



**7. North Wales Mobility and Driving Assessment Service**, The North Wales Resources Centre, Glan Clwyd Hospital, Bodelwyddan, Denbighshire LL18 5UJ, tel: 01745 584858, fax: 01745 582762, email: [alexbarra@btconnect.com](mailto:alexbarra@btconnect.com)

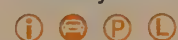


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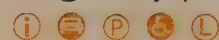
**8. Northern Ireland Mobility Centre**, Disability Action, Portside Business Park, 189 Airport Road, Belfast BT3 9ED, tel: 028 9029 7880, minicom: 028 9029 7882. email: [mobilitycentre@disabilityaction.org](mailto:mobilitycentre@disabilityaction.org)



**9. Oxford Driving Assessment Service**, Mary Marlborough Centre, Windmill Road, Headington, Oxford OX3 7LD, tel: 01865 227600, fax: 01865 227294. email: [oxford.mobilityservice@noc.anglox.nhs.uk](mailto:oxford.mobilityservice@noc.anglox.nhs.uk)



**10. Queen Elizabeth's Foundation Mobility Centre**, Damson Way, Fountain Drive, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NR, tel: 020 8770 1151, fax: 020 8770 1211. email: [info@mobility-qe.org](mailto:info@mobility-qe.org)



**11. Regional Driving Assessment Centre**, West Heath Hospital, Rednal Road, Birmingham B38 8HR, tel: 0121 627 8228, fax: 0121 627 8629.



**12. Scottish Driving Assessment Service**, Astley Ainslie Hospital, 133 Grange Loan, Edinburgh EH9 2HL, tel: 0131 537 9192, fax: 0131 537 9193.



(also does mobile driving assessment services)

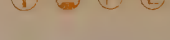
**13. South Wales Disabled Drivers Assessment Centre**, Rookwood Hospital, Fairwater Road, Llandaff, Cardiff CF5 2YN, tel: 029 2055 5130, fax: 029 2055 5130. email: [wddac@btconnect.com](mailto:wddac@btconnect.com)



**14. William Merritt Disabled Living Centre and Mobility Service**, St. Mary's Hospital, Green Hill Road, Armley, Leeds LS12 3QE, tel: 0113 305 5288, fax: 0113 231 9291. email: [wmmobilityservices@cwcom.net](mailto:wmmobilityservices@cwcom.net)



**15. Wrightington Mobility Centre**, Wrightington Hospital, Hall Lane, Appley Bridge, Wigan, Lancs WN6 9EP, tel: 01257 256409. email: [mobilitycentre@alwpct.nhs.uk](mailto:mobilitycentre@alwpct.nhs.uk)



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# Me and my car

For many people, a car is something that gets them from A to B, but for others it offers much more. Lucy Glynn talks to motorists who have a special bond with their four-wheeled friends



Independence day: Helen's Honda is vital to her job

**H**elen Smith from Norwich writes: Taking delivery of my Honda Shuttle two and a half years ago was a significant moment in my life. For one, it was the first car I had ever owned and, more importantly, it gave me back my independence. For the first time since becoming disabled I could go to places on my own. I love being just another road user. Behind the wheel of my car my disability doesn't matter. I can go where everybody else can go – well maybe not 10 storey car parks with no lifts.

My car is essential to my job. As a reporter for my local TV news, I have to drive from Norwich, where I work, to anywhere in East Anglia to interview people. I also need my car to drive for artificial limb appointments at Dorset Orthopaedic in Ringwood and hospital appointments in Cambridge. I have recently taken up wheelchair racing and my car is just about big enough to fit the racing wheelchair in the back.

My Motability car was

adapted by KC Mobility. They fitted a push-pull accelerator/brake, indicators in the headrest along with the other secondary controls, a push button handbrake and ignition (I can't use keys), automatic boot opening and a crane to lift in my power chair. Luckily the radio and air conditioning were push buttons so didn't need adapting.

I would love to drive a smaller car that doesn't drink petrol but due to the nature of my disability I have to drive an automatic and something big enough to take my powerchair. In six months' time I have to find the money for another Motability deposit. I am hoping that Access to Work will help me again with the adaptations. Unfortunately, the more severe your disability, the more it costs to get a car that you can drive.

I am now looking for a new car. Honda Shuttles aren't made anymore which is a great shame. This car has been fantastic and I will be sorry when the time comes to say goodbye.

**M**ark Leach from Barnet, North London, has had his Ford Focus estate for just over a year. Mark has cerebral palsy and chose the car from Motability. He is a community field worker for the charity Scope, and often has to visit families and schools.

"I have an estate because I have a little boy and we need the extra space to put the pram and travel cot in," he says. His son Christopher is two years old.

The car is automatic and has been adapted, with the accelerator pedal switched to the left-hand side.

He also has a remote control to switch on the lights, windscreen wipers and other electrics. Mark bought the Brian Page control system ten years ago for £500. It would have cost him £300 to transfer the system

to his new car, but Access to Work paid for the adaptation.

"I use the car for work. I use the car to get into work. I use it for getting around. If I didn't have the car, it would mean that I couldn't do the job that I'm doing. It would mean that I couldn't take on board the childcare needs that I have got.

"The thing I enjoy about having a car is the freedom that I didn't used to have. It's good on time saving too. On Monday morning I can take Christopher to the child minder for nine and be at work by 10. There's no way I could have done that without a car.

"I like my car so much, I won't wash it. In London, if I wash my car it would become nice and gleamy and it might get nicked. If it's dirty, people leave it alone."



LUCY GLYNN

The car's the star: Mark stands pro



"It has been wonderful to have the  
to transport Ciaran to all of the activities he partici

Maria Kelly of Harpenden



# ar



eside his unwashed Ford Focus



Car-azy: Car fanatic Geoff Picken tears up the race track in his Caterham 7

**G** Geoff Picken, from Monmouthshire, has a Caterham 7, a Lotus-designed racing car which has been adapted.

"When I push down on the handle bars I push down on the brakes. It's a bit like a dodgem but it goes OK," says Geoff, who is paraplegic.

"I'm sort of car mad. I have got a quad bike and a Ford Galaxy for running-around. It's just got an automatic gear box, normal hand control and a push/pull lever where you push down to brake and push up to accelerate."

Geoff takes part in sprints, hill climbs and track days in his

Caterham, but races against the clock. He can't get a full racing licence for safety reasons.

"It doesn't bother me. It's all good fun. Through the '7' I

have met a lot of friends all over Europe. I organise social events. I am pretty involved with that side – it gives me lots of pleasure."

## car tes in



**Lifting a growing Ciaran** in and out of a regular car became a big issue. Their new car means that Ciaran can drive his power chair straight up into the back when he goes to his regular horse riding and sailing lessons. Their lives are much easier now, as Maria says 'no planning or preparation, just up and go'.

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Smooth operator: The Sharan suits both Caroline and Lauren

**C**aroline West bought a Volkswagen Sharan to improve life for her daughter Lauren, who has muscular spinal atrophy.

"It's the most important piece of equipment we have, apart from Lauren's power-chair. It maximises Lauren's quality of life, it's comfortable and safe and that's very reassuring to me," she says.

Caroline, from Cardiff, bought her first VW Sharan, which was converted by Brotherwood, in 1996 when Lauren grew too big to be lifted into a car.

"We wanted a vehicle that didn't draw attention to Lauren, as she is quite shy. She was very conscious that she

didn't want to be high up and didn't want people looking at her in the vehicle."

Caroline was so pleased with the car that she has just bought a second one. "I have gone for exactly the same model, except it's automatic and a diesel, because diesel's much more cost effective. I wanted a CD player and Lauren wanted an automatic because it's smoother. I said surely it should be the other way round!"

"I love it from a driving point of view and Lauren loves it because her visibility is really good. She comes up the ramp, up the back and sits between our shoulders, right behind the front seats, so we can talk."

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# Ask Motability

DN readers have some questions about the Motability scheme and Noel Muddiman, managing director, has some answers



**Q** I have been on the Motability scheme for several years. My main problem with the cars today is raising the deposit. When I last took out a contract, Ford had 34 nil deposit cars on offer. This month, March 2003, they have four, including the Ford Ka, but these vehicles are not practical for me.

I found the VW Golf (£200 deposit) was very easy to get in and out of, but it has now been taken off Motability.

Where do we go from here? My vehicle is the only freedom I have. And, with further joint problems, I could well end up with no vehicle, marooned at home.

*Mick Spooner*

**A** Mick's problem is not uncommon, and is similar to the situation facing Mrs Argent's son (*see below*). Motability's contract hire prices have certainly increased over the past three years, primarily due to the fall in used car values and the increase in motor insurance costs, both of which are outside Motability's control.

Motability has calculated that the inflation in motoring costs over the past three years has run considerably ahead of the inflation rate against which the higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance is aligned to. We believe that the allowance should be around £6 per week higher for disabled people to obtain the equivalent vehicle available to them through the scheme in 1999.

We have brought this fact to the attention of the government, and will continue to seek cost savings throughout the scheme to keep it as affordable as possible.

A key part of this is negotiating between Motability operations and individual manufacturers on the subsidy levels on individual models. However, the motor manufacturers are unwilling to discount cars on the Motability scheme if there is a buoyant retail demand for the same model. As a result, individual models, such as the VW Golf, which Mick wanted, do get withdrawn at short notice. However, with 22 manufacturers supplying cars to the scheme, it should be possible for him to find a suitable and affordable equivalent.

**Q** The Motability scheme is great for people with minimal disabilities who need minor adaptations and can drive small cars. Problems start when you need to transport a power chair. Finding a few grand every three years for the non-returnable deposit on a big car is an immense burden, and you also have to pay for the car to be adapted and un-adapted every three years. Then there is the cost of fuel and the mileage limit. The only alternative is to buy independently.

*Helen Smith, Milton Keynes*

**A** Larger and heavily adapted vehicles do cost more than ones for people who don't need to transport wheelchairs or other mobility aids.

We do have a number of MPVs and large estate cars with limited rentals under £1,000, but finding this kind of money every three years can be very difficult.

We are planning to introduce extended leases for those whose current vehicle remains suitable, thus reducing the frequency of changing cars and the amount needed to fund advance payments.

In addition, we are simplifying our hire purchase scheme to enable people to purchase their vehicles more easily.

**Q** My Motability contract hire agreement ends in June. I have applied for another vehicle, but was told by Motability that I must pay an additional insurance premium of £1,200 to cover the next three years.

According to them, I have an unacceptable number of claims. One claim for an accident was my fault. But others – including smashed windows, one mirror smashed and another stolen, a steering wheel, radio cassette and wheelchair stolen at different times, and rubber around a back window slashed – were not.

The Motability contract states that it is the responsibility of the hirer to keep the vehicle in good condition and repaired if damage is caused. This I have done. I feel I am being penalised for someone else's doing.

*Stephen Bridge, Greater Manchester*

**A** A principal benefit of the Motability contract hire scheme is the inclusive comprehensive insurance cover, incorporated in the agreement.

However, the insurance provision has to be negotiated with an insurance company, and the scheme's insurance contract incorporates the number of claims and costs of claims for our group policy. Should any individual customer have an unacceptable number of claims – which puts them outside of the contracted provision – then the insurer, currently Royal & SunAlliance, is entitled to reject that individual as an insurance risk.

This is no different to privately-arranged insurance cover, in which individuals with a high number of accident claims face increased premiums, or even the refusal of a company to cover them.

Motability clearly faces a

dilemma in cases of multi-accident claims. On the one hand, we can insist with the insurer that insurance cover is maintained for high-risk individuals, or we can transfer an element of that risk onto the individual through allowing an excess to be applied. This latter option is the one we have chosen.

To insist on the continued insurance of multi-claimants by Royal & SunAlliance, Motability would have to negotiate the scheme's group insurance provision. This in turn would entail a higher premium to cover the higher insured risk; even a modest increase of £30 per vehicle would amount to a scheme premium increase of £12 million per annum. We consider this an unacceptable price to pay to protect people with above-average claims.

**Q** As a result of scratches identified at hand-back time, I made an insurance claim, paid a couple of excesses, and Royal & SunAlliance picked up the rest (about £1,000). However, the repairer told me that many of the repairs would make absolutely no difference to the car's resale value at auction. Is Motability shooting itself in the foot?

*Stewart Edwards, Didcot, Oxfordshire*

**A** Clearly, the condition of a car determines its selling price at the end of its Motability contract hire term. Whether or not the cost of body repairs can be fully recovered in the eventual sale price depends upon individual models and the demand for them.

Motability Operations have an experienced team to make such judgements, as clearly it would be foolish for the scheme to be in the situation described by Mr Edwards.

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**Q** The contract on my son's car, a Vauxhall Astra 1.6 Club automatic 3-door, expires in the spring. He needs an automatic as he finds it difficult and painful to drive a manual car. It would also go against his doctor's wishes. But to get this specification, he needs £299-£500 for a down payment. As he lives on his own and pays for gas, electricity and telephone – not to mention food – his money does not allow him to save anything. I have suggested contacting Motability Finance Ltd to see if he can get assistance for the down payment, but I

think that type of application takes up to six months. He needs to order his car in the next couple of weeks.

*Ann Argent, North Norfolk*

**A** In response to Mrs Argent's question, the Motability grants department may be able to help with advance payment costs on higher specification vehicles, such as those with automatic transmission or technical adaptations.

To ensure that applications for financial help do not delay the process of choosing and

ordering a replacement vehicle, all customers are sent letters six, and then three, months before their agreement ends.

The three month letter includes a price guide, so that customers can determine whether or not financial help may be required.

Demand for Motability's financial help is running at record levels, and, as the charity's funds are limited, all applications for financial help are means tested. This ensures that our charitable assistance goes to those in greatest need, but we seldom meet the first £500 of any additional payment required.



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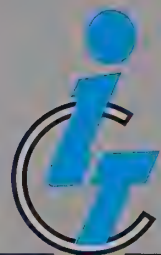
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# On the road again

Many people who become disabled wonder if they will ever drive again. Barbara Hatton reports on adaptations that can get you back in the driver's seat

Without doubt, the largest group of people that I see for assessment are those who have had a stroke. This question by Jim is typical: "Ten months ago, I had a stroke that affected the right side of my body. I'm very keen to return to driving, but with little active movement in my right arm and leg, how can I achieve this?"

Jim wants to drive to visit his new grandson and what he needs is a car fitted with a left-footed accelerator pedal.

A car with automatic transmission (and consequently no clutch pedal) is fitted with a new accelerator pedal to the left of the brake (see right). Obviously, this type of adaptation should be treated with caution. For those used to driving with a clutch, this new pedal can seem very familiar, but pressing it can bring a real shock to untrained drivers! Garden walls have



been demolished and garage doors dented by people unfamiliar with this adaptation. However, people do adapt successfully and it may allow drivers with an absent or weak right leg to continue driving.

For Jim, steering and operating the secondary controls is difficult with only one hand. The infrared unit

For anyone who has experienced a change in their functional ability following an illness or accident, one of the first questions on the road to recovery is: "Will I be able to drive again?" Working in a mobility centre, this is a question I often hear.

For most people with a physical problem, adaptations can help overcome the limitations they face when driving. So don't give up – there may be solutions to help you carry on.

may overcome this problem. It operates the secondary controls by means of a small box, like the remote control for a television. It can be mounted with a steering ball onto the rim of the steering wheel. All functions can be controlled using one hand, with no need to let go of the steering wheel. Someone with only one arm might find it helpful too.



Another person to benefit from adaptations is Maureen. She has full use of both legs, but following an accident, had her left arm amputated above the elbow.

She now drives using an infrared control with a steering spinner. She also finds adaptations on the handbrake

and gear selector of her automatic car invaluable.

As Maureen has some arthritis in her right hand, especially the thumb, she finds it painful to push the button to release the handbrake. An adapted release lets her apply and release the brake by using an extended handle and a specially devised lever on the gear selector helps her press the button on it (left).

Maureen has also found that features such as remote and central locking, electric windows and wing mirrors make vehicle access and adjustment much easier. These features are more readily available on even small cars these days.

People who visit our centre also want to know how they can get their wheelchairs in and out of their vehicle.

John, who is able to walk just a little, could load his own wheelchair into the boot of his estate car with a powered hoist. For people who have difficulty lifting a chair into the rear of a vehicle, these specialist hoists are particularly helpful. They work best when fitted into the rear of a hatchback or estate car.

John asked if there were alternatives for when he takes his family on holiday. As they need the boot for luggage storage, he needed another

way to load his wheelchair. While manually propelled chairs can be stored on the outside like a bicycle, John wanted to explore the possibility of using a roof-mounted box.


As he was concerned that walking from the back of his car was getting increasingly difficult, this option enabled him to carry his wheelchair on the car roof while sitting in the driver's seat. He was able to store his wheelchair, his family could occupy all the car seats and the boot was available for everything involved in a family holiday – including the dog.

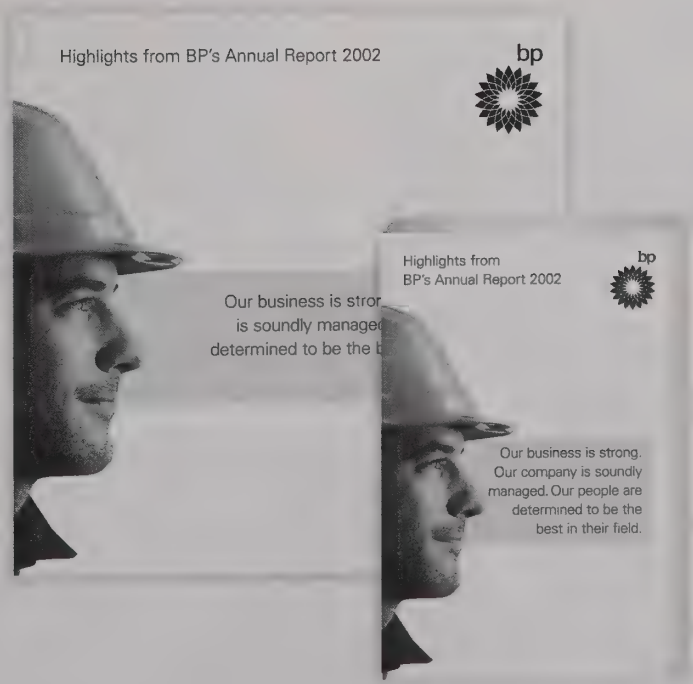
Another common problem is illustrated by Sue. Having lost the use of her legs following a fall from her horse, she still wanted to be involved in the world of riding. She can now drive her converted four-wheel drive vehicle with a hand-operated accelerator and brake, and tow her horsebox.

Since many cars have the option of automatic transmission these days, it is straightforward to fit this particular adaptation.

Besides the traditional push/pull single lever hand controls, methods of accelerating and braking by using the upper limbs are also available. These include a central ring fitted to the steering wheel, which accelerates the car when squeezed and enables the driver to keep two hands on the wheel. Braking is done by a lever attached to the steering column.


Barbara Hatton is an occupational therapist and the manager of Wrightington Mobility Centre.





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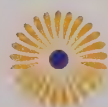
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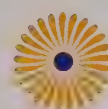
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Portsmouth Road, **COBHAM** ..... 08700-869157  
New Road, **DAGENHAM** ..... 08700-869158  
Edgware Road, **EDGWARE** ..... 08700-869159

Lancaster Road, **ENFIELD** ..... 08700-869160  
East Street, **EPSOM** ..... 08700-869161  
Pier Road, **GILLINGHAM** ..... 08700-869162  
Canonbury Road, **HIGHBURY** ..... 08700-869163  
London Road, **HOUNSLOW** ..... 08700-869164  
High Road, **ILFORD** ..... 08700-869165  
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Plaistow Road, **PLAISTOW** ..... 08700-869170  
Mutton Lane, **POTTERS BAR** ..... 08700-869171  
Victoria Road, **RUNCORN** ..... 08700-852033  
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**Polar** **DAGENHAM MOTORS**

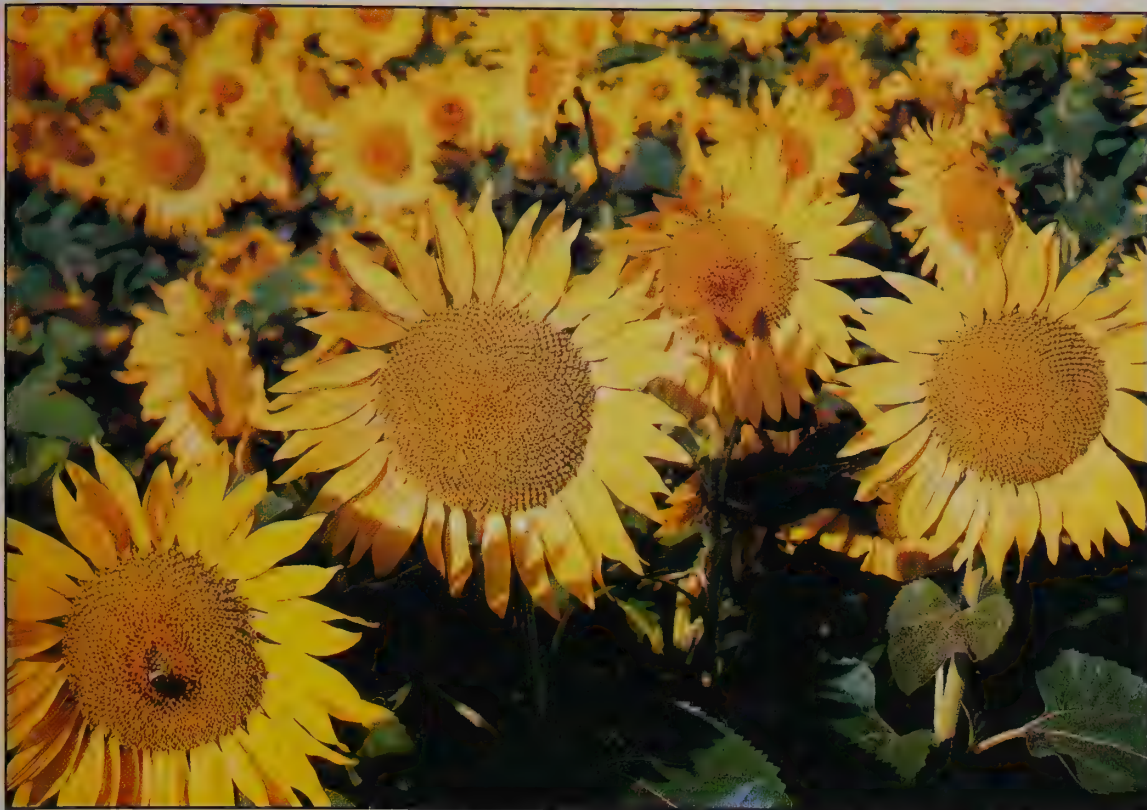


email [motability@polar-motor.co.uk](mailto:motability@polar-motor.co.uk)

7.9%  
APR

Typical example based on 51 reg Mondeo 1.8LX 5 door Cash price £8995.00. Deposit £366.00. 65, 4 weekly payments of £159.80. Amount of credit £8628.67. Total charge for credit £1758.33. Total amount payable £10387.00. Cars shown for illustration purposes only. Offers subject to availability. Prices correct at time of going to press.





Flower power: sunflowers do more than simply look pretty; they can be used to run your car

# From food to fuel

Talk of the oil industry typically brings to mind Arctic drilling, war and air pollution. But it doesn't have to be that way. Ed Passant explores the alternatives

It's not my place to reinvigorate the argument about whether the war in Iraq was really about oil, but it's certainly true that the oil industry has a lot of power. The full might of the petro-chemical giants (who still, incidentally, can't devise a decent way for a disabled person to fill their car up), have been doing their best for over a century to ensure that we are entirely dependent on their products for personal mobility.

Unproved tales of suppressed inventions, such as cars that run on water, are legion. But, without descending into the world of conspiracy and dastardly multi-nationals, it is certainly true that you could already be happily using alternative fuels – indeed, hundreds of people are doing this every day in the UK.

If you're driving a diesel, you might be congratulating yourself on the enhanced fuel economy and have worked out that the increased capital cost will be more than offset by the need for less fuel. But why are you running on diesel at all?

Rudolph Diesel developed his great invention in the late nineteenth century running entirely on peanut oil, a totally renewable resource that has a neutral effect on carbon dioxide production.

Earlier this year, ingenious motorists in South Wales spotted the possibilities and created a boom in ASDA's "Smart Price" vegetable oil.

The local store manager noticed the sharp increase in sales, but attributed it to local diet!

Customs and Excise investigators, hot on the trail of lost fuel duty, unearthed the fact that some drivers were doing their best to support hard-pressed farming communities by using a product grown from the soil.

Diesel cars with Bosch injectors were running quite happily on a 50-50 mix of diesel and "Smart Price", with no adverse effects on performance or wear and tear.

These drivers were making quite a saving, with vegetable oil available at around 40p per litre. But, sadly, those who weren't declaring it to Customs and

Excise were breaking the law.

Even standard vegetable oil, when used as a fuel, attracts the same duty as ultra-low sulphur diesel. This makes it the same price, or even slightly more, than diesel at the pump.

It's surprising that a Chancellor who says he's committed to improving our environment hasn't created a more favourable tax regime. But perhaps it's up to consumers to start making their voices heard. It isn't a hard argument – wouldn't you prefer to use a renewable resource that is less polluting if the government made it worth your while?

Are there any drawbacks? Rumours that cars running on veggie oil smell like the local chippy sound fairly suspect, but even if they are true, the status possibilities are considerable. The car has always been the ultimate in displaying wealth and power, but why waste money on a personalised number plate when you can announce your arrival with an up-market aroma? Turn heads with a whiff of sunflower oil; show you're an individual by using pressed groundnut;



tendencies by suggesting pure olive oil – first cold pressing of course!

Although I've taken a light-

**'The car has always been the ultimate in displaying wealth and power, but why waste money on a personalised number plate when you can announce your arrival with an up-market aroma?'**

separate yourself from the common herd by liberal use of sesame oil.

What would be your choice? I'll unveil my Francophile

hearted approach, there are real environmental benefits to using vegetable oil. For further information check

[www.geocities.com/vegoilcar/](http://www.geocities.com/vegoilcar/)

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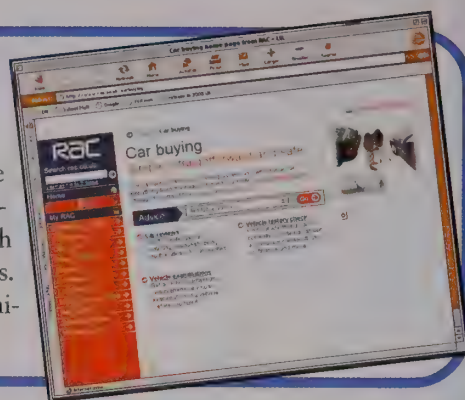


## Bright ideas

Dan Batten on the latest in motoring products and assistance

If you want top-notch advice and information on driving with a disability, The Disabled Drivers' Association will steer you in the right direction. Their information service aims to help disabled drivers find solutions to their motoring quandaries, either by phone or through a range of information leaflets. They also publish *Magic Carpet*, a quarterly magazine sent free to all members, and negotiate and administer price concessions with equipment suppliers. Annual membership starts at £10. Tel: 0870 770 3333, website: [www.dda.org.uk](http://www.dda.org.uk)

Are you about to buy your dream car but aren't sure of your rights if things go wrong? Then the RAC website is the place to go for some good advice on buying from a dealer or through a private sale. Tips include what you can rightfully expect of a car as regards its condition, details on a car's history you should be provided with and additional insurance or warranty terms and conditions. Details of additional checks, such as an RAC vehicle examination are also given. [www.rac.co.uk/carbuying](http://www.rac.co.uk/carbuying)



  
**the Mobility Roadshow®**  
the future of mobility

10 am - 5 pm  
**FREE** admission

**Thursday 12th, Friday 13th &  
Saturday 14th June 2003**  
**Donington Park, near Derby**

Do you have a mobility problem? Whether you are older, younger, disabled, a driver or a passenger, you will benefit from a visit to the Mobility Roadshow

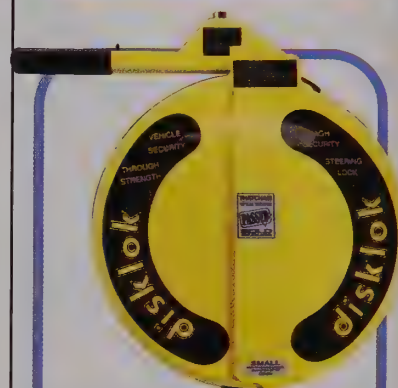
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Call Mobility Choice **0870 770 3222** for further details  
e-mail: [choice@gtnet.gov.uk](mailto:choice@gtnet.gov.uk) [www.justmobility.co.uk/roadshow](http://www.justmobility.co.uk/roadshow)

*If you have a mobility problem, the Mobility Roadshow is the single most useful event you can visit in 2003*

If you're buying a used car, Carwatch UK can help. They check the history of your potential purchase, answering questions such as whether the car has been stolen or subject to a total loss claim, or even if the log book details match the vehicle. So give them a call and make sure you're not buying a lemon. Tel: 0870 010 7899, [www.carwatchuk.com](http://www.carwatchuk.com)



Once you've got a car, you'll need to keep the bad guys away. One way is to immobilise the steering wheel with a Disklok. It comes in three different sizes and covers the whole of your steering wheel, not only preventing the theft of your car, but also the destruction of airbags. Available in yellow or titanium silver. £79.99. Tel: 01257 795100, [www.disklokuk.co.uk](http://www.disklokuk.co.uk)

It's worth knowing the motoring laws of individual countries if you plan to drive through Europe. Travel Spot can help you stay on the right side of the Gendarme. They provide information on requirements when driving in Europe, including warnings about on-the-spot fines – in some countries, your vehicle can be impounded until you pay up. Tel: 01767 631608, [www.travel-spot.co.uk](http://www.travel-spot.co.uk)

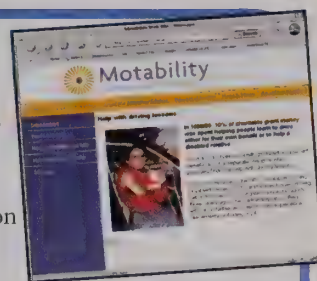




There's nothing worse than being in a car with stale air – which is where an Automate car air purifier comes to help. It uses corona discharge technology to project trillions of minute ions into the air, which destroy viruses and bacteria, and oxidises chemical contaminants. Take a new buddy on the road with you. £49 inc. p&cp. Tel: 0870 753 3765.

Earning to drive can be a costly business, so where can you go for financial help? Motability administer two means-tested schemes to help with costs, the first being the Charitable Driving Lessons Scheme. This is open to people with Motability vehicles who either want to learn to drive, or need to have a carer or relative learn for them. To apply, you must submit an application and quotes from two driving schools. If your application is successful, you will usually be offered help towards the cost of 47 lessons, which includes a two-hour trial lesson with the chosen school.

For prospective drivers between the ages of 16 and 24 who receive the higher-rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance, Motability offers the Young Disabled Drivers Scholarship. You need not be a Motability scheme user. Successful applicants receive up to 52 hours of driving tuition free, plus theory and practical tests. Customer Services, tel: 01279 635666, Minicom: 01279 632273, [www.motability.co.uk](http://www.motability.co.uk)



The Disabled Drivers' Motor Club originally won the right for disabled people to have driving licences and played a big part in establishing Motability. They also provide information and advice and publish *Disabled Motorist*, their own monthly magazine, along with information sheets and a members' handbook. Members also benefit from discounted fares on travel, special insurance schemes, savings on accessories and other offers. Membership starts at £10. Tel: 01832 734724, [www.ddmc.org.uk](http://www.ddmc.org.uk)



Another driving nightmare is not being able to pinpoint your exact destination on a map, so why not make it easy and let Streetmap do it for you before you set out. This website lets you find where any UK street is using a variety of methods, including postcode, local telephone code or even using Ordinance Survey co-ordinates. Or you could just be predictable and type in the street name and see what pops up. [www.streetmap.co.uk](http://www.streetmap.co.uk)



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If you want a perfect example of what talent and determination can achieve, look no further than Andrew Whitaker. He's not only a key member of Lancashire's disabled county cricket championship winning team, but a qualified coach who travels the country introducing disabled kids to the pleasures of the game. And if you want the ideal car for Motability driving, look no further than the Renault Scénic. It's not only given Andrew his independence, but the room and easy access to carry all his kit – and several team mates – in the most enjoyable style. For more details see your local Renault dealer, call us free on 0800 387 626 or e-mail [motability@renault.co.uk](mailto:motability@renault.co.uk)



Motability  
The leading car scheme for disabled people





**WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN!**

Read on to win six special offers – everything you need for a comfortable, stress-free journey



Win a fantastic PowerTrike™ and change your world. Add it to any standard wheelchair and it turns into a powerful and exciting mode of transport, enabling you to nip to the shops, pop down the gym or even take a ride into the countryside. PowerTrike™ is fitted with an easy to use governor that makes sure you can keep to the legal limits and, if you need a burst of speed, travel off road with speeds of up to 11mph.

Once the fitting kit is attached, the PowerTrike™ can be connected or removed in seconds.

DN has teamed up with PDQ International to offer one lucky reader the chance to win a PowerTrike™, normally £1,995. We are also able to offer runner up prizes of vouchers towards the purchase of a PowerTrike™. Simply tick the box in the entry form (see page 35).

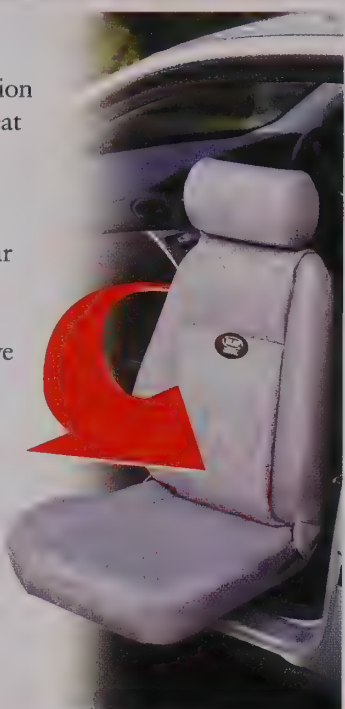
For further information contact PDQ International on 01223 208800 or visit [www.pdqmobility.com](http://www.pdqmobility.com)



**PowerTrike™**

Do you have trouble getting in and out of the car? If so, then Elap Engineering has got the ideal solution for you. The unique rotating car seat allows easy access into and out of most two or four door saloon vehicles. It is easy to fit and fully upholstered with additional lumbar support.

The complete unit normally costs £630, but DN has one to give away. Simply tick Car Seat (see entry form on page 35) for your chance to win. For further information and to claim a free operational video, call Elap on 01254 871599 or visit [www.elap.co.uk](http://www.elap.co.uk)



An easy to use, up-to date map is an essential companion for any car journey. Plan ahead and brush up on your navigation skills with a limited edition, hardback, leather bound atlas (not on sale in any retail outlet). In it you will find clear, 4 miles to 1 inch scale maps, 51 town plans and 7,000 places of interest. It also includes district maps of London, Birmingham, Manchester, Tyne & Wear and Glasgow.

For more information of AA publications please call 01256 491524, but for your chance to win one, tick Atlas (see page 35).

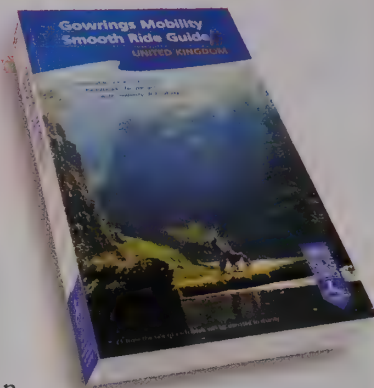
**AA**

*The Smooth Ride Guide – United Kingdom* published by Gowrings Mobility is an indispensable travel guidebook to a wide range of activities, attractions, hotels, leisure and sporting facilities, and days out, accessible to people with mobility difficulties and wheelchair users.

In support of 2003 European Year of People with Disabilities, Gowrings Mobility is donating one pound from the sale of each book to the MS Society, Princess Royal Trust for Carers and the Stroke Association.

Normally priced at £14.95 in bookshops, readers buying directly from Gowrings Mobility are offered a discounted rate of £12.50. To order a copy, call Lo-Call 0845 608 8050.

For your chance to win a copy, just tick the Smooth Ride Guide box (see page 35).



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Win a year's free membership of the Disabled Drivers' Motor Club (DDMC). You'll receive ten issues of *Disabled Motorist*, a specialist magazine packed with news, views, information, campaigns and features.

Membership also gives you access to the UK wide advice and information service and a wide range of discounts on goods and services, including up to 35 per cent on ferry crossings.

DN has teamed up with the DDMC to offer 50 free memberships to disabled people who are not current DDMC members. Simply tick the relevant box on the entry form and return to our Freepost address.

For further information or to join the DDMC, call 01832 734724 or visit [www.ddmc.org.uk](http://www.ddmc.org.uk)

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Email: [info@tnauk.org.uk](mailto:info@tnauk.org.uk)



The Disabled Drivers' Association (DDA) is the largest membership organisation of disabled motorists in the UK. The DDA is a valuable campaigner for disabled motorists' rights and offers a free information and advice service for members in all parts of the UK. Membership also offers a free quarterly magazine and discounts on ferries and Eurotunnel.

DN has six free memberships on offer, so if you would like to benefit from all the DDA can offer, why not complete the form on page 35?

For further information about the DDA or to become a member, just call 08707 703333 or email [DDAHQ@aol.com](mailto:DDAHQ@aol.com)

Fill in the coupon on page 35 or send a postcard to Disability Now, FREEPOST WS4323, London N7 9BR. Fax: 020 7619 7331, email: [elizabeth.cowley@scope.org.uk](mailto:elizabeth.cowley@scope.org.uk), for terms and conditions, see page 35

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Zafira 1.6i 16v consumption figures: urban 28.5 mpg/9.9 litres per 100km; extra urban 46.3mpg/6.1 litres per 100km; combined 37.7 mpg/7.5 litres per 100km. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 180g/km. Model shown is the Zafira Club 1.6i 16v 5 door with manual gearbox available with £495 advance payment. Price correct at time of going to press but may be subject to change. To qualify for this offer you must be in receipt of the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance. Full written details, including terms and conditions, are available on request. The facilities offered are for the hire (bailment) of goods. The Motability New Car Contract Hire Scheme is administered by Motability Operations, City Gate House, 22 Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1 9HB.

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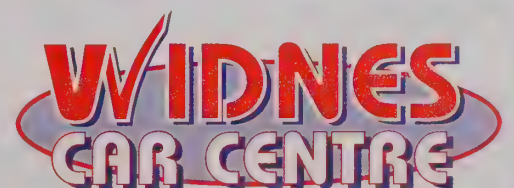
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Nissan Vanette Versa 2.3 Diesel	S165 DKC	Blue	4 seats, ramp	19,000	7,495
Nissan Vanette Versa 2.3 Diesel	W249 DKC	Red	4 seats, ramp	13,000	8,995
VW 800 1.9 Turbo Diesel Versa	V965 HHL	Blue	4 seats, ramp, winch	32,000	9,595
VW 800 1.9 Turbo Diesel Versa	V953 HHL	Blue	4 seats, ramp, winch	31,000	9,795
VW 888 2.5 Turbo Diesel Versa	OY02 WXC	Blue	4 seats, ramp, winch	22,000	11,995
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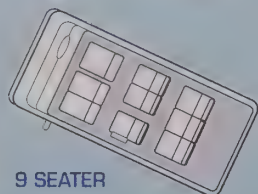
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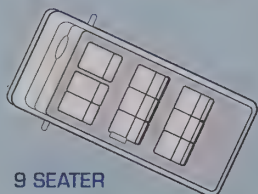
8 SEATER



8 SEATER



9 SEATER



9 SEATER

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\* Vehicle shown is 1.9 JTD ELX model.  
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# Rebuilding lives

Diana Morgan was appointed chief executive of the Limbless Association at the start of April, just as the civilian costs of the war in Iraq became evident. Nuala Calvi met her at the organisation's new headquarters

**D**iana Morgan has been chief executive of the Limbless Association (LA) for just three weeks and her office is almost overflowing with boxes holding offers of donations.

The phones have been ringing with offers from TV channels wanting to talk to her and celebrities desperate to be involved with the organisation.

This wave of interest started on 7 April, the day that pictures appeared in our newspapers of a 12-year-old Iraqi boy Ali Ismail Abbas (*right*) who had lost both his arms in the bombing of Baghdad. Their effect on the public was so profound that London's Metro contacted LA asking what it could tell the hundreds of readers calling in with offers of help to Ali and his family.

At a hurried meeting of the trustees that night, Ali's Fund for the Limbless of Iraq was born. In two weeks it has raised £200,000.

"I was expecting to be poodling along in the slow lane when I started, but it was straight into the fast lane," Morgan says.

"We were here until midnight most nights and I had grown men sobbing down the phone. It's been incredible."

he's growing and occupational therapy to get used to his surroundings again. He'll need physiotherapy to keep his remaining muscles strong so he can make the most of his prostheses, and, most importantly, psychological support."

Thanks to all the media attention, Ali is now receiving treatment in Kuwait. LA hopes to turn its attention to other children injured in the conflict by using the money to set up a rehabilitation centre in Iraq to provide them with on-going care and support.

Morgan herself is aware of just how important after-care can be. Thirteen years after the train accident in which she lost both her legs, she still has to return to the Roehampton Rehabilitation Centre at Queen Mary's Hospital for maintenance on her prosthetic legs. But it is the psychological treatment the centre gave her which she has found most crucial.

"You're dealing with the death of a large part of your body; it's a kind of bereavement for the person you were before. Rebuilding that needs to go on.

"In my case, I had been running my own company, travelling the world. I had a boyfriend, a car, a flat on the

shade of a movie star's hair when there are people in my position all over the world."

That sentiment led her to become involved with LA in 1995 and to become a trustee in 2001.

The organisation offers advice and support for patients with limb loss, whether as a result of congenital deficiency or amputation. 300 volunteer visitors use their experience to support recent amputees.

"It makes a big difference, having people around who have gone through exactly what you are going through," says Morgan.

"I remember being sat in my ward thinking 'what am I going to do?' Then this jolly army boy of about 22, who'd had both legs blown up by a landmine, came in on his prosthetic legs smiling and laughing. The minute he was there in front of me, I just knew I was going to be OK."

Morgan's next challenge will be to launch LA's first 24-hour helpdesk at Queen Mary's, which, if successful, will be replicated around the country.



International rescue: Morgan (*above*) hopes to set up a centre in Iraq to provide long-term support for people like Ali (*below*).

The organisation is also set to visit Ali in Kuwait and talk to amputees and doctors in the region about its work. Morgan believes the war is the beginning of a more international role for LA, as well as having raised its profile here.

"It's really opened the public's awareness of the horrors of war, of what it is to have a disability and that as a civilised society, we need to do our utmost to take care of these people."



To contribute to the Ali Fund, telephone 020 8788 1777, or go online to [www.justgiving.com/alisfund](http://www.justgiving.com/alisfund)

**'Members of the public who aren't aware of disability issues think that once someone has their new prosthetic legs or arms or a wheelchair, that's it'**

With a background in media – she started her career as a press officer on *Brookside* and went on to work for ITN before setting up her own TV and film PR company – Morgan is well placed to deal with the challenge. But it also makes her keenly aware of how quickly the interest could die down.

"The reality of Ali's situation will not hit home for many months. The worst part for him will be when this extreme attention fades away and it will be at just that time when he needs the most support.

"Members of the public who aren't aware of disability issues think that once someone has their new prosthetic legs or arms or a wheelchair, that's it, but we know that it's a very long process.

"Ali will need at least a pair of new arms every year while

fourth floor – and overnight I felt I'd lost everything of my previous life.

"But there are wonderful people at centres like Roehampton, who are acutely aware of that and who very slowly help you to rebuild your life."

The years following the accident were life changing for Morgan; not only because she married and had her first child, but because the experience prompted a career change.

"The question is: do you try to rebuild the same life you had before? I went back to my company nine months after the accident and the defining moment was hearing a PR agent moaning down the phone about the colour of a celebrity's hair.

"It kicked off something in me, a feeling of 'I cannot do this anymore – I can no longer pretend to be interested in the

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ILLUSTRATIONS: CLARE CURTIS

# Letters to the Editor

Send your letters to the editor  
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fax: 020 7619 7331,  
e-mail: editor@disabilitynow.org.uk



## Workplace bullying support groups

We would like to tell *DN* readers about two support groups which help people who are victims of workplace bullying.

Two years ago, in August 2001, my husband won an out of court settlement from his employers of 20 years for disability discrimination and bullying. My husband has retrolental fibroplasia-type blindness, and was the victim of the most dreadful, cruel bullying from the hands of his sighted colleagues.

Two organisations who have helped us are: the Andrea Adams Trust, national workplace bullying support group, tel: 01273 704900, email: mail@andreaadamstrust.org.uk and a new helpline, DAWN, Dignity At Work Now, tel: 01564 776748, www.dignityatworknow.org.uk Kate and Paul Brookes Redditch, Worcestershire

## Scope plan 'outrageous'

As a person with cerebral palsy (cp), I was astonished to read (*DN*, May) that the new chief executive of Scope, Tony Manwaring, is suggesting that Scope should become an organisation for all disabled people and not just people with cp. To abandon something so fundamental to Scope's existence is outrageous and should be fiercely resisted.

There are clearly issues and objects common to all disabled people and it is right and proper that Scope should work together and co-operate with other organisations. At the same time, people with cp have a unique set of problems and needs which merit representation by a dedicated organisation.

Also, whilst I believe that the disabled people's movement has done a great deal to promote the equality of disabled people and move disability onto the mainstream political agenda, it has been my experience that people with cp are more often than not further marginalised by virtue of the nature of our difficulties. It is against this background that I believe Scope should continue the good job it has been doing for the past 50 years and stick exclusively to representing and promoting the needs of people with cp.

**Harold Sharpe**  
Darley Dale, Derbyshire

## 'Complex needs' column wins praise

Congratulations to Katie Caryer (*DN*, May). I found her article clever and funny and, above all, she raised a point I've always hoped *DN* would one

day approach: the obscene sums of money spent on armaments that should properly be used to improve the quality of life for us all. These are not personal or political issues, but part of our freedom of speech and human rights.

Katie Caryer has opened a window of opportunity for us to discuss how our money is, and should be, spent. Many thanks to her and the editor.

**Zelda Robinson**  
London W14

No "My job" this month, alas, because no space – Editor

## Don't be pipped at the post

Leonard Cheshire's research revealed the difficulties disabled people face in accessing primary health care and the low priority primary care trusts give this issue (*DN*, April).

The Partners in Practice (PiP) project aims to address this. PiP is a new, three-year collaboration between the University of Bristol, University of the West of England and the Peninsula Medical School.

Funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England, it will create a curriculum framework that enables future generations of healthcare workers to help eliminate disability discrimination from clinical practice. Crucially, disabled people will influence directly the education of future health services providers by deciding learning outcomes, setting standards, delivering the curriculum and assessing practice.

Once completed, the curriculum will be sent to medical and higher education institutions along with guidelines for working in partnership with disabled people. If you would like to contribute to the debate, or get more information, please contact me: tel: 0117 954 6537.  
**Caro Howell**  
caro.howell@bristol.ac.uk

## Accessible housing

Following your story about the rent Claire Dixon pays (*DN*, May), she may find it useful to look at alternative housing.

Habinteg HA specialises in accessible housing for all, and does have homes in the north east.

**Paul Gamble**  
Habinteg Housing Association  
London EC4  
tel: 020 7822 8700  
website: www.habinteg.org.uk

## PC pulse

by Dan Batten

### Misdealt card

Former Norwegian amateur football referee Per Arne Brataas has confessed that he never ever sent off or booked players – not because he didn't know the rules, but because he has dyslexia. Per said that he never flashed red or yellow cards so as to avoid taking player's names and filling in post-match reports which give details of why players were booked. So much for referees' assistants.



Couldn't one of them have stood in Per's corner when it came to writing?

### A flying shame

On his way to and from giving a speech on embryonic stem cell research at an event in Australia, Christopher Reeve was treated to first class travel in a specially modified first class cabin of a Qantas jet. On his way to the same event, fellow wheelchair and oxygen user Christopher Newell received a lesser quality of service from Qantas, when they wrote off his wheelchair. If you can get it right for one wheelchair user, Qantas, how can you fail another so badly?

## Teen spirit



By Laura Giddings

I am 12 years old. Four years ago I lost my left leg below the knee. Two years later I was encouraged to take up swimming and joined Alfred's Aquatics, part of the Winchester and District Sports Association for the Disabled.

The first time I took my artificial leg off to go swimming was also the first time that no one took any notice of my missing leg. I knew I was going to like the club. Because everyone had some form of disability, I was accepted for who I was and not for my disability.

Most of the swimmers have a classification so they compete against other swimmers with a similar level of ability. I was classified as an S10 for freestyle and backstroke and SB9 for breaststroke and butterfly. It means I swim against young people with limb loss or other milder physical disabilities.

Some of my teammates are not able to get classified because they don't quite fit the profile. For example, one has severe hearing loss and should be an S15 (deaf swimmers), but cannot get classified because she is not deaf enough! This seems a bit silly because being less deaf than other competitors does not give her any advantage in the water.

Being able to compete in sport with other people with similar abilities is very important. It gives our self-confidence a huge boost and allows able-bodied people to recognise our achievements in terms that they can understand. *Laura won 7 medals and set two national swimming records at the Disability Sport England Junior National Championships in March. Her parents have set up a charity, Peggy and Friends, to offer support to families with a child amputee. Email: advice@peggyandfriends.org*

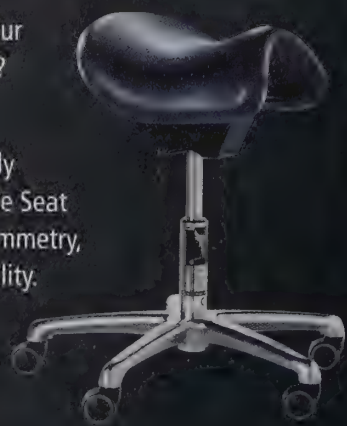
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## TV



Is truth stranger than fiction? Recent fictional TV storylines include diabetes (*Coronation Street's* Katy Nelson in the ITV1 Easter-ratings-booster-siege), and Parkinson's disease.

BBC1's *Holby City* tackled the issues around surgeon Alex Adams developing Parkinson's – but was it a coincidence that it mirrored the earlier, fantastic *ER* storyline? *Holby* also quite rightly cast Francesca Martinez as a woman with CP, pregnant with four babies following IVF treatment, who must decide whether to “zap” two of her foetuses. Strange this little hospital ward handles everything from IVF and antenatal clinics to open-heart surgery and orthopaedic surgery. Have the writers ever been to a hospital?

C4's airing of *Girl Interrupted*, starring Winona Ryder and Angelina Jolie, was set in a psychiatric hospital and, apparently, based on a true story. It's been compared to *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, although I couldn't tell you. It was so depressing, I switched off.

C4's chilling documentary *Dying For Drugs* had me welded to the screen. Exploring the stranglehold of big pharmaceutical companies on global medicine, it made me glad (even with the shortcomings of the NHS) I don't live in a developing country. Following transmission, GlaxoSmith Kline were shamed into halving the price of some HIV drugs for developing countries.

I wonder what first attracted celebrity/model/amputee Heather Mills to the multi-millionaire Sir Paul McCartney? C4 came up with a few suggestions (mainly involving the words “digger” and “gold”) when they dished the dirt in *Heather Mills: The Real Mrs McCartney*, revealing how chunks of her colourful life were either grossly distorted or simply left out of her autobiography. Oh, to have been a fly on the wall at the McCartney household during the screening of that!

Jane Shepherd



## Coming up



The artist known as Ashley will exhibit photographs at the Atlantis Gallery, 146 Brick Lane, from 26-30 June. The show explores issues of physical difference, and features models with disabilities (*below*). In his words: “My work explores the construct of identity, portraying subjects as autonomous, empowered, and inspirational individuals.” So that explains the refrigerator! For information, or if you have an interest in modelling, please telephone 020 7229 2944.



An exhibition of oil paintings by deaf and visually impaired artist Khaled Alvi are on display at the Ramada London West Hotel in Ealing until 23 July. The exhibition is open to the public. Tel: 07765 705278.



Visually impaired dance fans can look forward to Vocaleyes' performance of Antonio Gades' *Fuenteovejuna* at Sadler's Wells, 21 June at 2.30pm. The performance will be accompanied by audio description, and is preceded by a flamenco workshop at 11am specifically for people with visual impairments. Tel: 202 7862 8000.



Professor Charles Xavier, the wheelchair-using leader of the “mutant” militia, is back for more in *X2*, the sequel to *X-Men*. Played by Patrick Stewart (*below*), he sets out to save the world from an evil mutant plotting to assassinate the US President. Sounds like a gritty, realistic glimpse into the everyday lives of disabled people. On general release.



## Film



## Igby Goes Down



Among the things one realises with advancing age is that young people aren't half as interesting as they think they are, and that the term “writer/director” is one to make your heart sink. In Burr Steers's *Igby Goes Down*, Igby (Kieran Culkin) is a rebellious 17-year old from a wealthy background, with a cold, drug-dependent mother (Susan Sarandon), a schizophrenic father (Bill Pullman), an uncaring elder brother (Ryan Philippe) and a materialistic godfather (Jeff Goldblum).

Igby runs away from a series of boarding schools, then heads for that home of all that's kind, good and wholesome in American society: New York City. There, he falls in with what I think are meant to be bohemian characters, though they seemed pretty tame to me. Eventually his mother dies, he realises he loved her after all and he sets out for California. And then everything is alright.

The film looks good, but a movie as shapeless as this is highly dependent on its characters, and they just aren't interesting enough. The father's schizophrenia is



particularly cursorily presented: some messy self-harm in a shower followed by vegetating in an institution, with no real insight into the nature of the disability or how it affects the family.

## Disability Film Festival

A more interesting take on the condition may perhaps be found in *An Artist's Guide to Schizophrenia*, one of the films featured in the fifth *Disability Film Festival*, which runs from the 5-8 June at the National Film Theatre, opening with Petra Kuppers's experimental video poem *Sleeping Giants*.

An encouraging aspect of this year's festival is the number of full-length films on show. These include the American docu-drama *F\*ck the Disabled*, the German drama *Langer Gang* and the American drama *By Hook or By Crook*. The

festival closes with *Rush 3*, the latest in Ray Harrison-Graham's feature versions of his C4 series about a group of deaf young people.

C4 are not sponsoring this year's festival, but I am assured that this has nothing to do with the incident last year when a commissioning editor was roundly booed after announcing that he had just commissioned *Celebrity Wheelchair Challenge*.

This may account for the lack of panel discussions on making it in television. Instead, there's a heavyweight examination of sources of support for disabled film-makers. A second discussion will look at relations between the disabled people's movement and disability arts. Full details on [www.disabilityfilmfestival.net](http://www.disabilityfilmfestival.net)

Allan Sutherland

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# 'For me, flexible working is key'

John McGill would not have been able to look after his partner, Linda, with a full-time job

**O**ur social worker asked: "And how are you coping, John?" "Oh, I'm alright," I replied. At the time, Linda had been bed-ridden in our living room for several months. In constant severe pain, she depended on me and her two teenage sons for feeding, washing and toileting. Compared to her, I thought I was alright, but I couldn't afford to dwell on the question for fear of breaking down.

Linda had a long history of back pain, but after an accident in 1994, things became much worse. During her bad episodes, I would carry her up and down stairs over my shoulder and be there to help day and night. We also had to pay a succession of private specialists and alternative

We first got help from a voluntary agency because we weren't eligible for council care. I remember an assessment officer visiting while I worked on my computer at the foot of Linda's bed. Shocked to see how we were living, she arranged a few hours support each week, giving me time to attend meetings, shop or sleep.

After a second operation on Linda's spine failed, I realised we had to change our lives. I could not continue with high-pressure freelance work. We needed more help and we had to get out of that house, which had become a prison for Linda.

Linda subsequently registered as disabled. Our social worker helped us obtain 25 hours of care per week and apply for benefits we were

## 'Employers must be aware of the mutual benefits of accommodating the needs of disabled employees and carers alike'

therapists when the NHS could not or would not help.

I was a freelance graphic designer, and often worked at night or on weekends when someone else could be with her. As work became increasingly computer-based, it became easier to work at home.

unaware of. She also made great efforts to get us rehoused, but no properties were available. Despite being high priority, we were told it could be up to 10 years before anything came up.

In the meantime, I had been working on a report for Scope



OLIVER SINFIELD

The home front: John and Linda found that flexibility was the key to comfort

about accessible housing and learned about shared ownership (part buy, part rent) and disabled facilities grants (DFGs). Although our housing association said they could not adapt our home even with a DFG, they did put us on to a shared ownership agency.

Our criteria were very specific: we needed a place near Linda's hospitals, the boys' school and my clients. Our occupational therapist also advised us that we should consider houses with a downstairs toilet and one flight of stairs that could have a stairlift fitted.

It was then that a part-time vacancy for a graphic designer became available at Scope. Having freelanced for the organisation the previous year, I was familiar with the work and people and they understood my situation and the flexibility I needed. My

weekly hours could be variable, allowing me to work around Linda's needs with a minimum guaranteed monthly income. With some freelance work on top, this meant we could apply for a mortgage.

Soon after, a house came up that we thought met our criteria. Unfortunately, the occupational therapists said they did not have enough time to assess the property and suggested we ask a stairlift company. A sales rep visited and, unsurprisingly, assured us that installing a stairlift would not be a problem.

Only after we moved did the occupational therapists visit and point out that the stairs were not suitable for a stairlift, and that there was no room for a through-floor lift. Moving again was not an option, so we managed by using an ambulance carry chair to take Linda up and down the stairs.

Thankfully, our new housing association built ramps to make the ground floor accessible, but then a new therapist suggested we have an extension built to provide a ground-level bedroom and shower room.

Four long, stressful years after our move, with financial aid from a DFG, the construction is now complete and we have the house we need.

Our circumstances also improved when Linda was referred to a pain management programme. Though still in constant pain and prone to severe relapses, she can now walk short distances with crutches and takes fewer drugs on good days. Also, last year, we switched from agency care to direct payments. She has fewer hours, but could negotiate a package to meet her specific needs.

As well as personal care, she can now be driven to regular hospital appointments and taken out shopping on her good days. Though still financially stretched, we cope much better with the variability of our situation.

For me, flexible working is key. I could never have held down a nine to five job and cope with the pressure of care, housing, medical and financial issues. But without a guaranteed income, we could not have obtained a mortgage and Linda might still have been trapped in our old home.

Scope also benefits from my 20 years of professional experience. Clearly not all jobs can be as flexible as mine, but employers must be aware of the mutual benefits of accommodating the needs of disabled employees and carers alike.

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# Here's to your health

Michael Barry has been a food broadcaster and cook for 28 years and is best known by fans of BBC2's Food and Drink programme. His career began when he worked as a broadcaster on Capital Radio and was asked to fill in on the cookery slot. His popularity led to regular appearances on numerous TV and radio shows, including TV:AM and LBC and in publications ranging from Woman's Own to Radio Times. He has written 29 books about food and was diagnosed with type two diabetes eleven years ago.

I had the good fortune to follow the healthy eating revolution before discovering I had diabetes. At home, I had already moved to eating a lot of high fibre food; I didn't eat nearly as much meat as before and began to use lower fat options in cooking, like olive and sunflower oil rather than hard fats. I had diabetes for five

I don't cook anything I wouldn't be able to eat, so it's fortunate that I've never been a big pudding cook. I prefer cooking things with garlic in them, which doesn't really lend itself to desserts!

If a recipe calls for four tablespoons of sugar, that's a huge alarm bell. I try to make fruit-based puddings instead,

**'I had diabetes for five years before it was diagnosed, and the consultant said it was my healthy diet that had protected me for so long'**

years before it was diagnosed, and the consultant said it was my healthy diet that had protected me for so long.

One thing I started to do after being diagnosed, though, was to cut out things that were high in unrefined sugars. I was a bit of a devotee of Hagen Daas ice cream, but now I eat it once a month if I'm lucky.

like crumbles, bakes and sorbets. I developed a range of fruit fools for my books and programmes that are also low in fat because they use greek yoghurt.

A good trick is to use "half spoon" – a mixture of real sugar and artificial sweeteners which is sold alongside ordinary sugar in



supermarkets. You can find similar alternatives to salt that help with high blood pressure, which can be dangerous to people with diabetes.

With diabetes, you have to keep an eye on yourself and how you're feeling. If I haven't had a chance to eat for a while and start to get hyper, I just say I really need a cup of coffee and a biscuit. Even people in TV don't work for 12 hours without a break, so it's not too difficult.

I've always found people hugely sympathetic. I don't do injections in front of other people because I feel it invades their privacy. I mainly control

my condition through tablets and diet anyway.

I've slowed down a lot recently in terms of my career, and just do two or three TV appearances a year. Having diabetes is part of that; I had worked flat-out for years and was advised not to keep going at the same speed.

I notice myself getting more tired, but that could just be the effects of being on the wrong side of a free bus pass. Diabetes shouldn't be a barrier to anything; it's just a case of accepting you've got it and being careful. Even now, I live at what would be described as a fairly manic rate.



Self-health guru: Barry today (above), and as host of Food and Drink on BBC2 (below)

## Raspberry fool

### Ingredients

- 225g/8oz fresh or frozen raspberries
  - 25g/1 oz "half spoon"
  - 150ml/5 fl oz double cream
  - 150g/5 oz plain yoghurt
  - Mint leaves, to decorate
- Crush the raspberries with a fork and mix them with the sugar. Put them aside to let the

juices run for a moment. Beat the double cream with a whisk until it's thick and peaking, then beat in the yoghurt, spoonful by spoonful. You'll find that if you whisk between times, the cream doesn't lose its thickness and you have twice the quantity of whipped cream but only half

the amount of fat.

Mix the raspberries into the cream and yoghurt, stirring to get a marbled effect. Pile into four wine glasses, decorate with mint leaves and a couple of extra raspberries, if you have them. Chill for 30 minutes before serving.

*Serves four*

## Chicken with sautéed apple slices

### Ingredients

- 25ml/1fl oz cooking oil (not olive)
- Four chicken breasts
- 100g/4oz shallots (or small onions)
- One tbsp cider vinegar
- 225ml/8fl oz freshly pressed apple juice
- One tbsp fresh or one tsp freeze-dried tarragon
- Two English eating apples
- 50g/2oz butter
- One dsp arrowroot

Sauté the chicken breasts in the oil until they are golden on both sides. Peel and very finely chop the shallots, add to the

chicken and cook for another two to three minutes. Season generously and pour on the cider vinegar. Allow to bubble almost dry, then add the apple juice. Turn the heat to low, add the tarragon, cover the pan and allow to simmer for 20 minutes until the chicken breasts are done right through.

Meanwhile, core, but don't peel, the apples and divide into 12 sections per apple. An apple-cutting device is ideal for doing this effortlessly. In a separate pan, heat the butter until it foams, add the apples and, over a medium heat, turn

until they are golden but not broken up.

To serve, remove the chicken pieces to a serving dish and stir a tablespoon or two of water into the arrowroot and add to the sauce. Stir over a medium heat until the sauce thickens and clears – this will take about two minutes. Arrange the apple slices around the chicken and pour the sauce over or under it, depending on whether you prefer an old-fashioned or nouvelle presentation.

*Serves four*

## Living Independently at Home

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ILLUSTRATION BY CLARE CURTIS

# Dear Ann

- love and loneliness
- bereavement
- personal problems
- advice and support

Ann Darnbrough, who is disabled herself, is co-author of the *Directory for Disabled People* and other guides. Write to her at *Disability Now*, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW or email your problem to [editor@disabilitynow.org.uk](mailto:editor@disabilitynow.org.uk)



## Seeking independence

I want to find housing for myself so that I can be independent. It seems impossible at present because I have always lived with my parents and they have looked after me.

Naturally, they are concerned that I could be making a big mistake and it would be better for me to settle down and continue to live with them.

Can you suggest who I can consult?

*Fred, Doncaster*

Whatever you do, don't give up. Once you find the beginning of a thread and hold on to it, you will learn that although it may be difficult, there will be opportunities for you to move on.

While your parents are naturally concerned for you, they will be proud when you have taken this big step.

You could start with your local authority. They usually have some accommodation for disabled people, even if you have to wait a while. You could also contact HoDis, which exists to promote housing resources for disabled people in the UK. They work with local disabled persons housing services and they will be able to tell if there is one in your area.

### Abuse holds me back

I am disabled and have made a reasonable success of my life. I thought I had got over the sexual and emotional abuse I suffered in childhood. But now it's all coming back to me again. Am I never going to be free of this agony?

My mother died when I was young and I have cut off all contact with my abusive father, but added to the remembrance of abuse is the hole in my life where there should be a family.

I feel very lonely.

*Mary, Birmingham*

While you may always miss having a family, I am sure you will have learnt it is good to have friends.

I don't know anything about your life, but it is important that you look outward – perhaps by doing voluntary

work – not necessarily in the area of abuse.

It is surprising how you can defeat the demons of loneliness by burying yourself in other people's lives. Because you feel so strongly, I believe you are a very sensitive person.

I do recommend you also contact a new freephone line provided by NAPAC, the National Association for People Abused in Childhood.

The dedicated lines offer advice and support, and aim to empower people like you to manage their own recovery.

### Persistence pays off

For the past four years I have been caring for my wife who has been on dialysis after having a stroke.

I also care for my severely disabled daughter, Joanne.

Previously she lived in Birmingham, eight miles away.

Because most of her medical requirements were similar to age-related illnesses, she ended up on a geriatric ward, although she was only 29.

There was no physio, no TV or radio, and because she became so depressed, I decided to bring her home.

Eventually she became well enough to move into her own home. Walsall social services, who serve the area where I live, have been wonderful, not only looking after Joanne but also offering me support as well.

In contrast, Birmingham social services offered her no care at all.

Recently we heard about the Direct Payments scheme and now Joanne is able to purchase her own care.

However, she is now bothered by a tax assessment. Somehow, there always seems to be another hurdle to overcome.

I can only say to others: do

not give up and do not accept the first answer you are given. Persistence pays off.

*Mr. W.A., Walsall*

I am sorry to hear about the considerable difficulties you are experiencing.

You really are a wonderful example of persistence and determination. The local authority lottery is dreadful and you have provided a stark example of how it operates.

I was interested to hear about your daughter's experience with Direct Payments. I would recommend that you and other concerned readers contact the National Centre for Independent Living.

They have considerable experience in advising disabled people about their rights and how to manage their own care packages.

### Taking on the council

In answer to Mr Allen of Stevenage, regarding help in securing a parking space (DN Feb), I would like to suggest a way to tackle such difficulties.

In Stockport we have had problems with dropped kerbs so I thought I would try to do something about it.

I submitted a written question to the local area committee of the council. I was then asked to give a presentation to the committee.

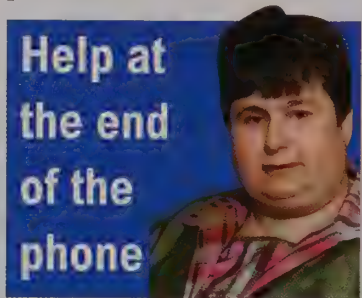
The council has now started to rectify existing kerbs and to ensure new dropped kerbs comply with guidelines.

I think that this method of lobbying is better than seeing a councillor or MP.

*Peter, Stockport*

Congratulations! I'm sure readers will be encouraged to try out your strategy of dealing with local issues.

It is important to realise that local authority councils really do work for the benefit of local people – but first they need to know what the problems are.



**Help at the end of the phone**

DN's telephone counsellor Lin Berwick gives disabled people and carers advice and support on personal and spiritual problems. Disabled herself, Lin is a psycho-therapeutic counsellor and Methodist local preacher, with a postgraduate diploma in homeopathic medicine. If you have something you need to discuss in confidence, talk to her on Mondays 6pm-10pm and Thursdays 1pm-5pm, tel: 01787 882111.

**new**

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The new NEPTUNE bathlift from Mountway offers users the ability to take a warming bath with complete independence and safety, at any time.

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A simple push button mechanism will lower you gently into the bath and raise you, in your time and at your convenience.

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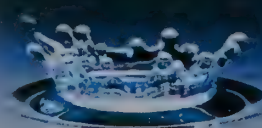
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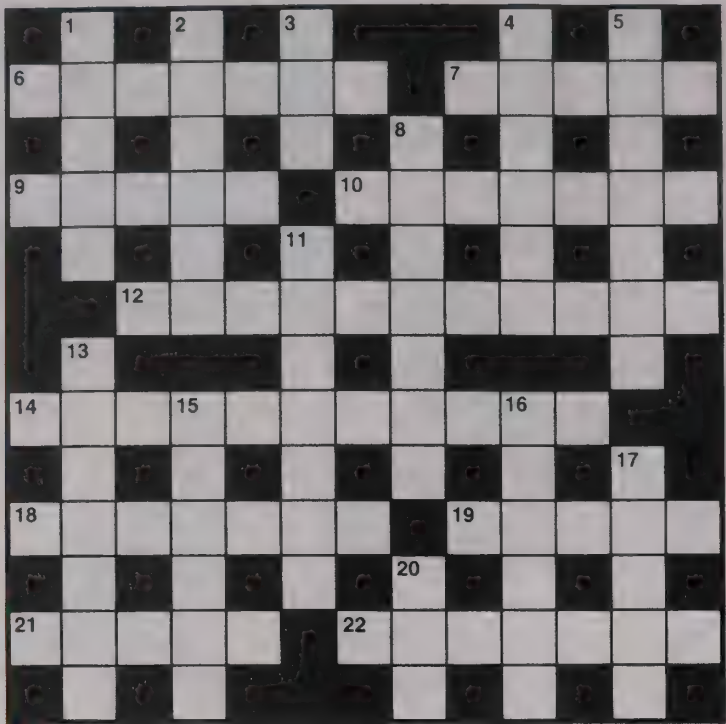


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bringing independence to life









**Across**

- See 21 Across
- Photographs of holiday breaks (5)
- See 2 Down
- Her new album is called *American Life* (7)
- Period in the late Middle Ages when there was a revival of interest in art and learning (11)
- Disease involving a failure of the blood to clot (11)
- See 21 Across
- The \_\_\_\_\_ is the seat of government in the Netherlands (5)
- And 18 Across, 6 Across. People with this problem often need assisted breathing devices called Non Invasive Positive Pressure Ventilation (5, 7, 7)
- The Marx Brother with the moustache and the cigar (7)

**Down**

- Mountainous country on the northern frontier of India (5)
- And 9 Across. Athlete who won the heptathlon gold medal at the Sydney Olympics (6, 5)
- Deaf people's organisations have campaigned for years to get it recognised as an official language (3)
- Long-haired variety of goat or rabbit (6)
- Popeye enjoys eating it (7)
- Vegetable with a pale yellow tapering root (7)
- Having a holiday under canvas (7)
- Young attendant at a wedding (7)
- Brownish-crimson colour (6)
- In Greek legend, he flew too close to the sun (6)
- Japanese dish of raw fish (5)
- The Disability Rights Commission (3)

CROSSWORD BY JIM MCLAREN  
ILLUSTRATION BY SAM GILLESPIE  
ANSWERS ON PAGE 27



# GENIE

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## What's on

**The Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health** will hold "Whose Values are they Anyway? Dilemmas and values in providing mental health care", 7-8 July, Manchester. Aimed at professionals working in mental health services as well as mental health service users and their carers, the conference will discuss key themes including relationships, dilemmas and values in mental health care and developing services and skills. Workshops will include mad or bad, a debate on dual diagnosis, suicide prevention versus life promotion, and experts in practice versus experts in experience. Register online at [www.scmh.org.uk](http://www.scmh.org.uk) or contact Sarah Lord, tel: 020 7827 8384, email: [sarah.lord@scmh.org.uk](mailto:sarah.lord@scmh.org.uk)

**The Royal Cornwall Showground** plays host to Cornwall's first Disability Awareness Day, 20 July. The day will feature stands from product manufacturers and suppliers based in Cornwall and Devon, as well as a range of activities to try, including wheelchair abseiling, scooter trials, off road all terrain vehicles, tag rugby trials and training with Plymouth Argyle FC. If you want to keep the kids quiet, there are puppet shows, magicians and stilt walkers to entertain them. Tel/minicom: 01208 77713, email [cornwalldad2003@aol.com](mailto:cornwalldad2003@aol.com)

## WORK EXPERIENCE

Do you want to be a journalist? Did you know that *DN* offers work experience to disabled journalism students or disabled people who can demonstrate previous journalism experience? If you want to join us for one or two weeks, please contact Dan Batten, tel: 020 7619 7323, email: [editor@disabilitynow.org.uk](mailto:editor@disabilitynow.org.uk)

**CROSSWORD ANSWERS**  
ACROSS: 6. Disease 7. Snaps 9. Lewis 10. Madonna 12. Renaissance 14. Haemophilia 18. Neurone 19. Hague 21. Motor 22. Groucho  
DOWN: 1. Tibet 2. Denise 3. BSL 4. Angora 5. Spinach 8. Parsnip 11. Camping 13. Pageboy 15. Maroon 16. Icarus 17. Sushi 20. DRC

## Publications

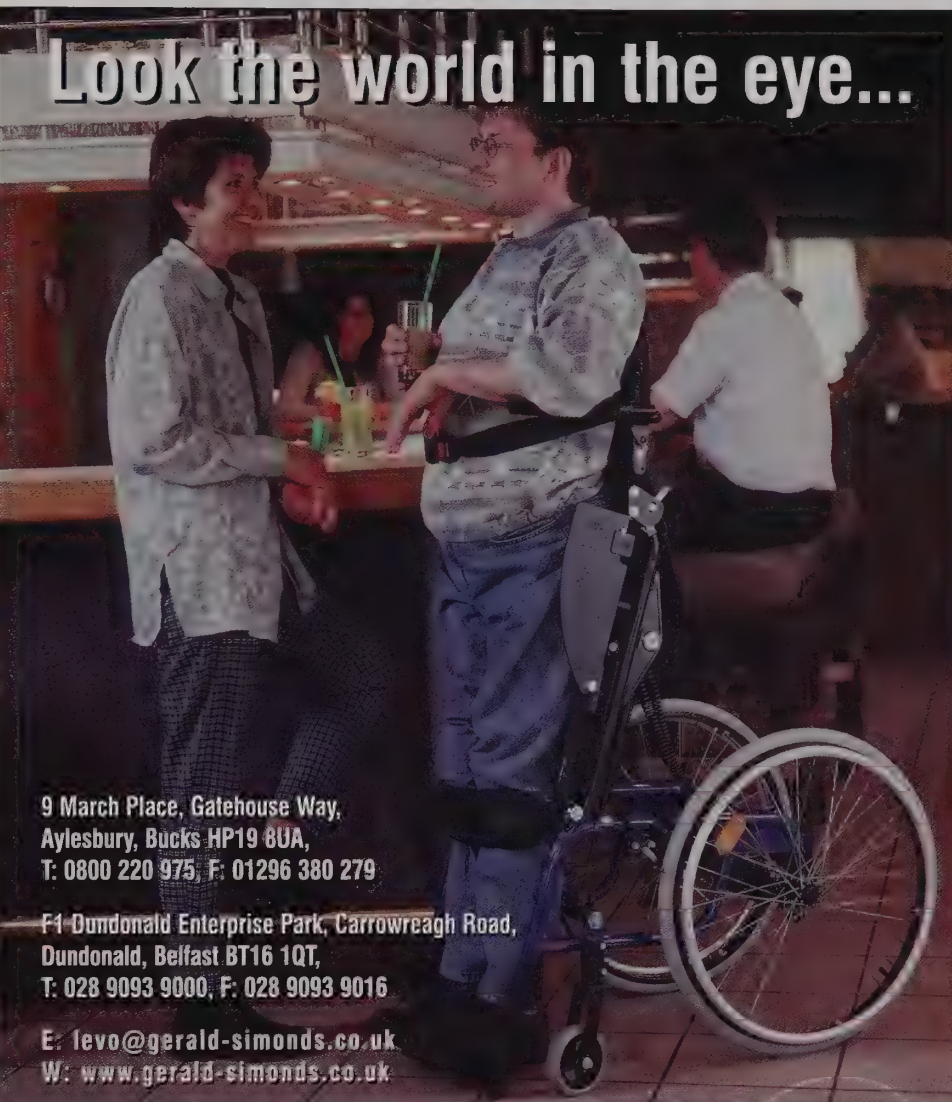
The **Time Out Sport, Health & Fitness** guide lists over 70 clubs and facilities that specialise in disabled sport and fitness in the London area. Everything from bowling to cricket is covered, along with a comprehensive listing of sport organisations that cater for particular disabilities. £8.99, Tel: 020 7813 3000 or see [www.timeout.co.uk](http://www.timeout.co.uk)

The **Doctor Patient Partnership (DPP)** has published *Dealing with Stress*. The leaflet details what stress is, how to recognise signs of stress, coping with it both at work and home, personal approaches to stress management and how to organise workloads. There are also useful contact details for where to go to find further

help. Available from DPP member GP surgeries and from [www.dpp.org.uk](http://www.dpp.org.uk)

The **National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)** has a list of its essential publications available, which include the *Good Campaign Guide*. This guide details areas of planning a successful campaign, from

pre-planning to campaign evaluation, with other tips on how to raise funds and keep your campaign on the right side of the law. Other titles include the *UK Voluntary Sector Almanac* and the *Voluntary Agencies Directory 2003*. Contact the NCVO helpdesk, tel: 0800 2798798, email: [helpdesk@ncvo-vol.org.uk](mailto:helpdesk@ncvo-vol.org.uk)



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E: [levo@gerald-simonds.co.uk](mailto:levo@gerald-simonds.co.uk)  
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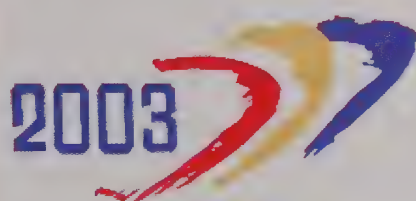
And it is a lot cheaper to buy a stand-up wheelchair than refit a kitchen, let alone the house or workplace!

Levo stand-up wheelchairs are portable, plain or brightly coloured and are available in a variety of powered and non-powered configurations.

Call now for a **FREE** information pack or to arrange a demonstration



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## THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF DISABLED PEOPLE 2003

### Let's make it happen - The European Campaign Exhibition Centre

One of the major activities of the European Year of Disabled People will be a travelling exhibition centre, which starts in Greece in January and travels through all of the member states during the year finishing its journey in Italy in December 2003. The exhibition centre will be in the UK from the 2nd June to the 2nd July. The exhibition vehicle is a large accessible pantechicon lorry, which opens out into a large stage. The vehicle when opened is 15m long 7m wide and 3.1m high. The centre comes with two information areas, one paper-based and the other an IT area.

The UK Disability Forum has the responsibility for the vehicle whilst in the UK. Lots of interesting events are planned for the tour. For further information visit 3 web sites.

• [www.ukdisabilityforum.org.uk](http://www.ukdisabilityforum.org.uk)

• [www.disability.gov.uk](http://www.disability.gov.uk)

• [www.eydp2003.org](http://www.eydp2003.org)

or ring UK Forum before June on **020 7725 4242** or Mobile on **07980 876617** in June.

The tour is as follows:- Greenwich (2nd/3rd June), Hackney (4th June), Park Royal (5th June), Epsom Derby (6th/7th June), Southampton (8th June), Bristol (9th June), Birmingham (10th/11th June), Mobility Roadshow, Derby (12th/13th June), Northern Ireland (15th June), Manchester (17th/18th June), Leeds (19th June), Newcastle (21st/22nd June), Edinburgh/Glasgow (24th/27th June) and Wales (29th June - 1st July).



# TENERIFE



**A**ccessible Travel and the DN Travel club offer you seven nights at the 4-star Hotel Noelia Sur, at a members' discounted price of £255 per person for all June departures. For our less spontaneous members, the bargain prices of £265 for September and October or £355 for July and August are also too good to miss!

Situated some 900 metres from the long promenade of Playa de Las Americas, the Noelia Sur offers accessible accommodation, including roll-in showers.

These knockout offers are based on two adults sharing an accessible twin room on a half board basis (flights not included, prices on request). Also, for members, we include accessible minivan transfer to and from Tenerife airport. Flights available from UK regional airports. Please call for best rates and departure times. Book today and secure your place in the sun.

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\*All offers are applicable to new bookings only and are subject to availability. All prices are correct at time of publication and may be withdrawn without prior notice at any time. Prices are based on maximum occupancy of selected cabin grade. Price changes may occur or additional cruise operator changes may apply: please check at time of booking. All reservations are subject to standard booking terms and conditions as detailed in the cruise company's main brochure. A credit card surcharge (to maximum amount) will be applied to credit transactions.



## DN TRAVEL CLUB MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name .....

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E-mail .....

Do you travel overseas? Yes ☐ No ☐

How often? .....

Favourite destination? .....

Have you ever been on a cruise? Yes ☐ No ☐

Do you use a wheelchair? Yes ☐ No ☐

Would you like to know about our Sensory Travel service for people with visual and hearing impairments? Yes ☐ No ☐

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### Rules & Regulations

1. Applicants will be issued with a membership number which must be quoted at the time of booking. Otherwise no discounts or special offers will apply once a confirmation of booking has been issued.
2. Discounts and special offers will apply to the member and all other parties booking under the same lead name/party organiser, unless expressly indicated otherwise in the relevant DN Travel Club offer.
3. Membership of the DN Travel Club will be valid as long as the DN Travel Club remains in operation. In the event of cessation of the DN Travel Club, one month's notice will be given in *Disability Now*.
4. Any discounts offered will be deducted from the final balance.

## DN LINAGE

Tel: 020 7619 7320, Fax: 020 7619 7331, Minicom: 020 7619 7332, E-mail: [patrick.durhammatthews@scope.org.uk](mailto:patrick.durhammatthews@scope.org.uk)

### • Personal

**DISABLED WHITE LADY** living in Kent area walks with elbow crutches. 56 years' young. Short, cuddly, with happy outlook. Car driver who likes to read and garden but a smoker. Looking for male friends/companionship. Go on, pick up a pen and write. Box no: 230

**MAN 54 BISEXUAL**, slightly disabled due to radiation therapy many years ago. Kind, caring and generous, seeks new friends. Box no: 231

**MY NAME IS** Howard. I am a single 38 year old man and a wheelchair user. My interests are art, reading, good food, wine and spirits. I would like to meet a single lady initially for friendship/relationship preferably in the south East, so please get in touch. Box no: 232

**ATTRACTIVE, CARING MAN** with diabetes, loves driving, travel, films, dining out etc, wlm lady with polio to enjoy the good things in life. Box no: 234

**JADE, 20, MIXED** race, female, London, has multiple sclerosis. Looking for young people to form socialising group, to have fun. Also seeks compatible male for company. Box no: 235

### • Cars/vans/caravans

**CARMOBILITY FRONT PASSENGER** 180 degree swivel seat. Fits virtually any saloon car. £1,000 new, offer £300. Tel: 01273 515698 (Cambridge).

**CHAIRMAN FIAT FIORINO** 1.7 diesel, 6k miles, red, S reg. sale due to bereavement, MOT expires Feb 04. In immaculate condition, £3,500. Tel: 01249 653907.

**ELSWICK ENVOY 998CC**, A reg with automatic transmission, only 1k miles, 2 owners. Fsh, wheelchair included. £900 ono. Tel: 01869 340423.

**FORD FIESTA 1250** Zetec with Constable carchair conversion: wheelchair system replacing the front passenger seat. S reg, full MOT, 18k miles, one owner, silver, air con. Car cost £8,000, conversion £5,300. All in immaculate condition, reasonable offers. Tel: 020 8527 8545.

**CHAIRMAN FORD, GOWRINGS** conversion, H reg, 69k miles, MOT August, tax September. 5 new tyres. £1,350. Tel: 0785 57747 (SE18).

**CITROEN 2X VOLCANE** T/diesel, n reg. Only 20k miles. Usual extras. Constables carchair conversion. Tax and MOT 'til Dec. £2,600. Tel: 01491 838711.

**CHAIRMAN FORD FIESTA** Courier 1.3, 2 rear seats plus wheelchair passenger, lowered floor with rear ramp, front vision panel, red, M reg, 45k miles, fsh. MOT until December, always garaged. Excellent condition, £3,495 ono. Tel: 01291 672603.

**NISSAN PRAIRIE SLX** 2 litres, manual, J reg. Brotherwood conversion, 2 tone grey, raised roof. Power steering, electric windows, central locking, 2 owners. Recent service and MOT, only 72k miles. £5,995. Tel: 01483 277861.

**CHAIRMAN FIAT FIORINO** P reg, 96, 52k miles. Gowrings conversion, tax August, MOT October. Rear ramp, electric chair straps, lowered floor, extra rear passenger seat. Good condition, £2,500. Tel: 01162 781134 (Leicester).

**CHAIRMAN CORSA COMBI** 1.4, N reg, royal blue, lowering rear with manual ramp. Carries 4 plus wheelchair. 25k miles, MOT expiry October, side windows. £3,200 ono. Tel: 01736 762705.

**VOLKSWAGEN CARAVELLE 2.5**, P reg, 31k miles, air con and e/windows. 6 seater plus wheelchair, 2 lady owners. Wheelchair conversion and telescopic ramps. Fsh, vgc, £8,250 ono. Tel: 020 8856 3352.

**NISSAN CARGO VANETTE** 1997 2.3 diesel, metallic blue, Poyntings conversion rear ramp access, 60 inch headroom. 2 owners, 25k miles. Full MOT. £4,750 ono. Tel: 01795 470588.

**FORD TRANSIT M** reg, 17k miles, dark maroon, vgc. Steering Development Conversion that consists of right hand drive tiller steering. Radial brake/accelerator. Electric gear change/ignition, electric ramp/tailgate. Electric clamp down system with Travellina powerchair and wheelchair included. £11,700 ono. Tel: 01323 640299 (Eastbourne).

**CHAIRMAN FORD COURIER** M reg, 50k miles, 2 rear seats plus wheelchair passenger, MOT October 2003, fsh. Only 2 owners, excellent condition, £4250 ono. Tel: 01923 232148 (Watford).

### • Wheelchairs/scooters

**PRIDE LX10 ELECTRIC** wheelchair. Brand new with full working instructions. With charger and kerb climbers. Cost £2,800, never been used, asking £1,800 ono. Tel: 01483 420196.

**AQUASOOTHE TRAVEL LITE** scooter, goes in car boot, runs on battery. Reconditioned. £600. Tel: 01189 272073.

**REMPLOY STOWAWAY WHEELCHAIR**, attendant propelled version, little used, complete with safety manual user guide. Max occupant weight 220 pounds (16 stone). £200 ono. Tel: 01908 584494.

**PRIDE SONIC SCOOTER**, bought September 2002, used 4 times. Portable, easily dismantled. Full instructions, cost £1,200 new, £800 ono. Tel: 01491 641497.

**CRUSADER CRUISER WHEELCHAIR**, new battery, just serviced. Brochure available, £300 ono. Tel: 01491 641497.

**TWO EXTENDING RAMPS** for disabled access, cost £200, any offer. Tel: 01491 641497

**TGA WHEELCHAIR POWER** pack with battery and charger. Fits most wheelchairs, hardly used. £350 ono. Tel: 01383 8732289 (Fife).

**2 SUNRISE MEDICAL** chairs: Powertec F35, new July 2002, never been used. £1,100 ovno. Horizon 80 £700 ovno. Tel: 02476 470134.

**INVACARE PHOENIX PLUS** electric wheelchair with charger. In perfect condition, cost £2,000, asking £900 ono. Tel: 01892 870370 (Kent).

**POWERTEC F50 INDOOR/outdoor** electric wheelchair, 15.5" seat width, kerb climber, right hand control, charger and perspex tray. Vgc, bargain price £550 no offers. Tel: 01405 763803 (Yorkshire).

### • Holiday swap

**OWNER OF FULLY** adapted bungalow, West Wales, seeks holiday exchange suitable for C3/4 (overhead hoist, roll-in shower), Tel: 01970 820314. Email: [rogerRaggar@Rotmail.com](mailto:rogerRaggar@Rotmail.com)

Cont'd pg 32

### • Recruitment (on pages 28 to 34)

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In liaison with community, voluntary and statutory agencies, you'll create a range of services to support learners - with particular emphasis on assistive technologies and adapted learning materials. In addition, you'll manage the centre's finances and develop income streams to ensure financial viability. Once up and running, you'll ensure it develops into a self-financed multi-agency centre.

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Closing date: 6th June 2003

Visit us on [www.oxfordcollege.ac.uk](http://www.oxfordcollege.ac.uk)

OXFORD  
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FURTHER YOUR SKILLS IN A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT



• Holidays (Cont'd pg 30)

**Norfolk, Nar Valley Holiday Cottages**

3 self-catering, all wheelchair accessible, 1 with wheel-in shower room, 2 with airbaths. Mostly en-suite. On working farm - peaceful location, central for beaches and tourist attractions. Indoor heated swimming pool. Also B&B.

**More details and prices, contact: Rosemary on 01760 338797.**

**Willow Cottage - The Black Isle, 5 mins drive Inverness.**  
Beautifully equipped, Tourist Board 3 stars with Disability Award 2.

1 double, 1 twin, both ensuite. Situated on a working croft amid lovely scenery with wildlife park close by. Moray Firth dolphins, kites, buzzards, deer etc, and our Nessie! Inverness offers good food, cinema, theatre etc.

Brochure/details, tel: 01463 731455, website: [www.hIGHLANDDISABLEDCOTTAGEHOLIDAYS.CO.UK](http://www.hIGHLANDDISABLEDCOTTAGEHOLIDAYS.CO.UK)

**LUXURY CHALET IN POOLE, DORSET**

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4 superb self-catering cottages located on the banks of the River Dee next to Balmoral. Designed and equipped to the highest standard with excellent facilities for disabled people, their families and friends. Short breaks available November - March. Please contact CRATHIE OPPORTUNITY HOLIDAYS Tel: 01339 742100 for more details or email: [info@crathieholidays.org.uk](mailto:info@crathieholidays.org.uk) [www.crathieholidays.org.uk](http://www.crathieholidays.org.uk)

**ODDICOMBE HALL HOTEL**

Provides an excellent holiday for the disabled person and their family. We have full disabled facilities and are able to cater for organised parties. All wheelchair accessible rooms open on to a private garden with conservatory and have breathtaking sea views. Private car park with unloading at entrance to the hotel. Open all year. Why not escape and relax at delightful Babbacombe, Torquay? Category 2. Special 3-4 day breaks Nov-April. Discount for group bookings. Tel: (01803) 313457.

**NAISH HOLIDAY VILLAGE:**

Cliffop park with "excellent" status. New Milton, Hampshire. Excellent site facilities within 100 yards, with indoor/outdoor pools, restaurant, bar, take-away. Fully equipped, two bedroom fully wheelchair accessible, log cabin accommodation. Sleeps 6. Well furnished. Free club membership.

**GRANGE COURT HOLIDAY VILLAGE:** Park with "good" status, Goodrington Sands, Devon. Excellent site facilities within short walk, with indoor/outdoor pools, restaurant, bar, take-away. Fully equipped, 2 bedroom, fully wheelchair accessible mobile home. Sleeps 4-6, well appointed. Free club membership. (Purchased with funds from the National Lottery).

Details: Mr P Cash, tel: (01425) 672055 Bournemouth Spina Bifida Association. Registered Charity No. 261914.

**JERSEY**

**LA ROCCO SELF-CATERING APARTMENTS**

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• Recruitment (on pages 28 to 34)



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**CENTRAL SCHOOL OF SPEECH AND DRAMA**

**DISABILITY SUPPORT OFFICER (0.5)**

Salary range: £21,619 - £29,828 (pro rata) including London Weighting  
Fixed-term contract until December 2005

The Central School of Speech & Drama, a specialist HE institution with c. 700 students, has recently received funding from the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) to develop its provision for disabled students. This is a three-year project and we now wish to appoint a Disability Support Officer to carry forward this work.

The School is committed to providing an inclusive and positive learning environment for its disabled and dyslexic students. We now wish to further develop our provision and to ensure that the School meets the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act (SENDA).

The Disability Support Officer will take forward a disabilities development plan and will assist the School to review and develop its policies and procedures to ensure that they are inclusive and accessible. The role will also include provision of guidance and support to individual disabled and dyslexic students.

You will be a graduate with knowledge and experience of disabilities issues in the context of a large organisation, including a knowledge and understanding of disability legislation. Interacting with a wide range of people, you will have excellent interpersonal skills and be an effective communicator. We are seeking a highly motivated person who has well-developed organisational and writing skills.

For an informal discussion about the nature of the role you can talk to Linda Cookson, Director of Quality, on 020 7559 3950 or email [l.cookson@cassd.ac.uk](mailto:l.cookson@cassd.ac.uk)

For further information and application details contact Personnel on 020 7559 3955 or email [personnel@cassd.ac.uk](mailto:personnel@cassd.ac.uk)

Closing date for receipt of application forms is the 30th June. It is anticipated that interviews will be held on 9th July and that employment will commence from August 2003.

Central School of Speech & Drama is dedicated to Equal Opportunities in employment and seeks to achieve diversity amongst its staff to reflect the community it serves.

• Tenders



**British Sign Language (BSL) video: project for tender**

The London Office of Arts Council England, is seeking to appoint a video production company to produce a British Sign Language video of its new Grants for The Arts leaflet and application form.

The video is specifically targeted at BSL first language users and will use BSL first language presenters. Preference will be given to companies with a proven track record of work in this area.

The deadline for receipt of submissions is: **5pm on Friday 6 June 2003.** Copies of the full brief and Grants for the Arts are available on the website at [www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk) and in other formats on request from the address below.

Please send a written proposal, including project budget, timetable, overview, examples of similar work you have undertaken, and details of two referees, to:

**Jonaki Sarkar**, Communications Officer, The London Office of Arts Council England, 2 Pear Tree Court, London, EC1R 0DS  
Or email: [jonaki.sarkar@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:jonaki.sarkar@artscouncil.org.uk)

General Inquiries: 020 7608 6100; Fax: 020 7608 4100;  
Textphone: 020 7608 4101

**DN disabilitynow**

**Marketing Manager**

£24,764 - 26,499 (incl. ILW)

Are you an enthusiastic person with marketing experience in publishing? Do you enjoy a challenge? If so, we need your creativity and initiative to promote the UK's leading disability newspaper via subscriptions and the newstand. We are looking for someone with the flair and knowledge to increase our circulation, strengthen brand awareness and identify promotional opportunities. You must be IT literate, possess excellent people skills, understand ABC rules and subscription procedures and have a clean driver's licence.

For an application form contact Dan Batten, *Disability Now*, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW, tel: 020 7619 7323, fax: 020 7619 7331, email: [dan.batten@scope.org.uk](mailto:dan.batten@scope.org.uk) Closing date: 2 June 2003.

Registered Charity No: 208231

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2001 Y Master, 1 owner, 19,000 miles, lift	£14,995
2001 Y VW Caddy, low mileage, P.A.S., air con	£11,995
2000 W VW Caddy Invatravel, low mileage	£9,995
2000 W VW TD LWB, 1 owner, 8,000 miles	£12,750
2000 W Suzuki Wagon R Liberty, 1 owner, 28,000 miles	£6,495
2000 W Dispatch Chairman, 1 owner, 6,000 miles	£12,250
1999 V Escort Chairman diesel, 44,000 miles, PAS, 1 owner	£9,500
1999 V Kangoo Chairman 1.2, 1 owner, 10,000 miles	£8,250
1998 S VW High Top, Side Lift, details to follow	
1998 S Transit Diesel, , Lift, Air Con, 23,000 miles	£9,995
1998 R Mercedes Vito, Ramp, 10,000 miles	£10,500
1998 R Fiat Fiorino TD, Universal Mobility, 34,000 miles	£5,495
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3 bedrooms/lounge/dining kitchen/study/tv/dvd  
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Villas/cottages, some "disabled friendly" for 2-10 persons.  
Own pools. Phone Irene: 020 8440 6219 [www.irisvillas.com](http://www.irisvillas.com)

**Brittany Cottage to let.**

Adapted for wheelchair use. Good access to beaches. Sleeps up to 6.  
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[www.player.pt](http://www.player.pt)**Near Salisbury - newly converted stable block**

self-catering units. Ground floor 1 double/twin bedroom en-suite wheel-in shower. Upstairs 1 double, 1 single, shower room. Open plan kitchen & living room. Patio & shared garden. ETB category 2, 4-star highly commended. Non-smoking. Prices from £195 pw. Available all year. Tel: 01722 349002, e-mail: [mail@old-stables.co.uk](mailto:mail@old-stables.co.uk), [www.old-stables.co.uk](http://www.old-stables.co.uk)

**Great self-catering in South West Wales****Sŵn-y-Gwynt Cottage**

Sleeps 4, fabulous views, flawless luxury. TV, linen, power all included.

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We can also arrange assistance from health care professionals if required. For information on booking a holiday in accessible self-catering cottages, hotels, or farm house B&Bs please ring and speak to a holiday adviser.  
Tel: 01437 563565, email: [info@carewellholidays.co.uk](mailto:info@carewellholidays.co.uk)  
[www.carewellholidays.co.uk](http://www.carewellholidays.co.uk)

To find out about listing your accommodation please contact us.

**PENROSE BURDEN NORTH CORNWALL**

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Holiday Cottages designed for wheelchair users and their families. Rural setting with superb views. Dogs welcome. Wood burning stoves and daily meal service.

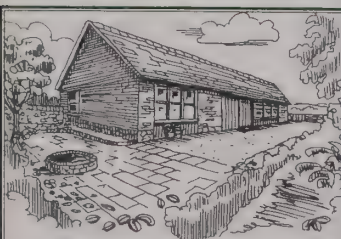
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PL30 4LZ. Telephone Bodmin

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**Take a break at Jay's Barn**

Jay's Barn (sleeps 4) has been specifically designed & rebuilt for disabled people. Beautifully situated in its own grounds/garden. Easy access to Alton Towers, Peak District, The Potteries, or enjoy a visit to one of the level routes in the locality. Open all year. £230 off peak £300 peak per week. Also short-term lets. 1 double bedroom, single wheelchair users welcome. Payphone, no smoking, no pets (guide dogs accepted), linen and towels provided.

ETB 3\* Level 1 National Access Scheme.

Ring Christine Babb on 01889 507444.

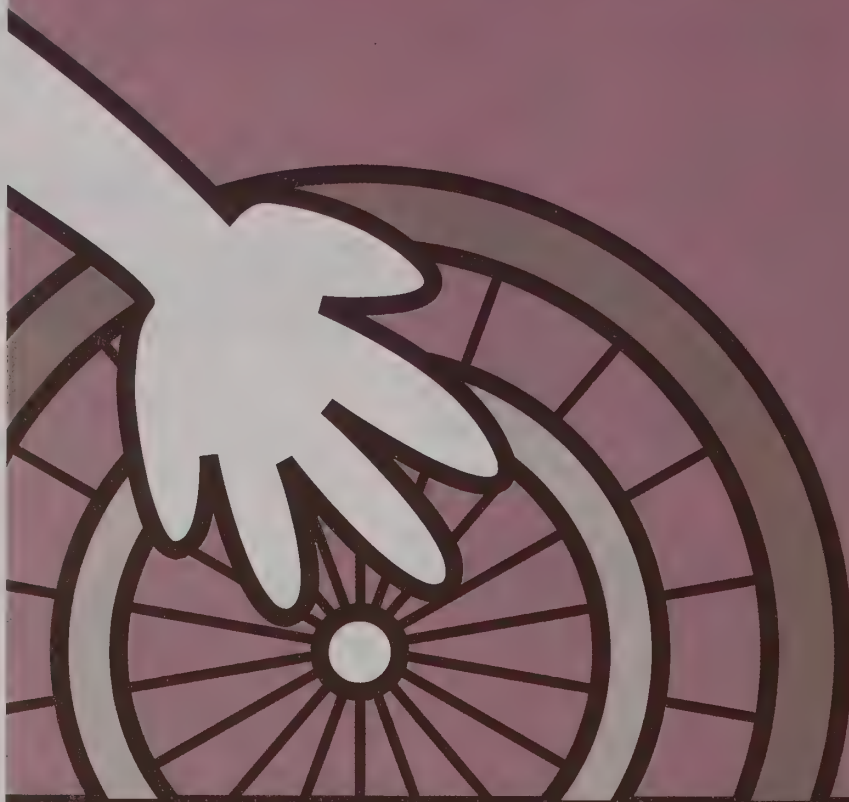
Jay's Barn, Bradley in the Moors, near Alton,

Staffordshire Moorlands ST10 4DF.

email: [jaysbarn@lineone.net](mailto:jaysbarn@lineone.net) [www.jaysbarn.co.uk](http://www.jaysbarn.co.uk)

**Recruitment (on pages 28 to 34)**

# WE NEED A HAND

**Yours**

We're actively recruiting from all sections of the disabled community. The black community. The asian community. The gay community. The white community. The whole community

A diverse workforce will make us better able to meet the care needs of the equally diverse patient population which we serve. It's dedication like this that makes us one of the country's leading hospital Trusts.

For more information call

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If you would like further information please contact us by one of the following methods:

Write to: Personnel Services, Horsham District Council, Park House, North Street, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 1RL or ring our 24 hour answer phone on 01403 215134

E-mail: [personnel@horsham.gov.uk](mailto:personnel@horsham.gov.uk)

Or visit our website at: [www.horsham.gov.uk](http://www.horsham.gov.uk)



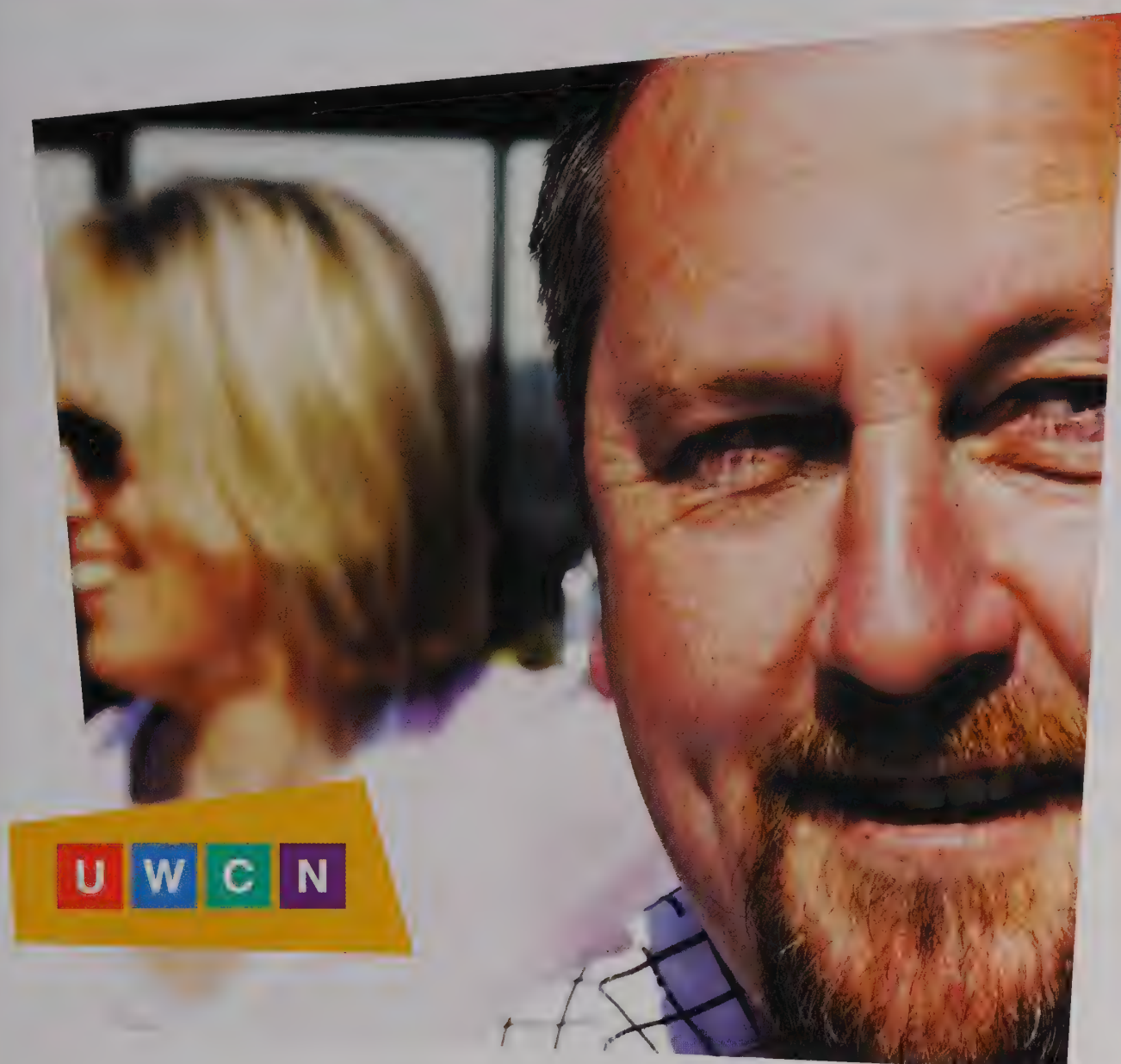
**Horsham District Council**

Working in partnership to secure a better quality of life for all in the Horsham district



**DEADLINES: Disability Now July 2003 published 28 June classified deadlines: Booking: 13 June. Copy: 17 June.**





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Closing date for the receipt of completed application forms is 6th June 2003.

No agencies please. For more information on the Law Society, please visit our website at [www.jobs.lawsociety.org.uk](http://www.jobs.lawsociety.org.uk)

Striving to ensure equal opportunity for all.



### • Public appointment

## East Sussex Disability Association



Actively empowering and supporting disabled people

### JOIN THE ESDA TRUSTEE TEAM

ESDA is a growing and vibrant voluntary organisation of disabled and non-disabled people, working across the county to remove the many barriers that discriminate against children and adults with impairments. In order to help us to secure the rights of disabled people in East Sussex to have full and equal access to services and facilities, we would like to attract more trustees to deliver our strategic priorities and aims.

We have been very successful through our hardworking team of staff, trustees and volunteers in delivering a growing range of services to our many disabled service users, including welfare rights advice, information and independent living support. However, we now need to strengthen our Board of Trustees to lead us through the challenging but exciting period ahead as we implement our latest Strategic Plan 2003 – 2005.

If you think you would like to play a part in helping ESDA to fulfil its aims, and are able to commit some of your time on an unpaid basis, then we would be very pleased to hear from you. We can pay your expenses to attend around nine meetings a year, usually held in the early evening.

We will be holding an Open Evening on Wednesday 18 June between 5 and 7pm, when you are welcome to visit our offices in Eastbourne and meet members of staff/trustee team. You can also obtain our information pack with details of how to apply from:

**ESDA, 1 Faraday Close Eastbourne BN22 9BH**

**Tel: 01323 – 514500 Fax: 01323 – 514501 Email: [info@esda.org.uk](mailto:info@esda.org.uk)**

We particularly welcome applications from disabled people.

ESDA is a registered charity no. 1042071 & a company limited by guarantee no. 2979027.

Registered in England & Wales.



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Mile End Hospital

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The Disability Options Team (DOT) provides specialist multi-disciplinary rehabilitation for adults aged 16-64 years, living in the community with physical and neurological disabilities. Service users are accepted for medium to long-term therapy and treatment if they are assessed by the Team as having the potential to derive a health benefit. Care Managers work in partnership with service users and their family/carers and clinicians from a range of disciplines in the Team to provide community care assessments and care packages that will compliment and enhance their rehabilitation.

You will be employed by the Physical Disabilities Team (PDT) of London Borough of Tower Hamlets Social Services (LBTH) and will be seconded to the DOT of Tower Hamlets Primary Care Trust (THPCT). You will provide a Care Management (CM) service to clients of the Disability Options Team.

For further details regarding the post, please contact Kathy Taylor, Team Manager, Physical Disabilities Team on 020 7364 5853.

Closing date: 13 June 2003.

For an application pack, please call the 24 Hour Recruitment Line on 020 7364 4488. A special Minicom service is also available for those with a hearing or speech impairment on 020 7364 4489. Please quote reference 9708MAY010.

We shall ensure fairness and equal opportunities throughout our workforce and in service delivery. We welcome applications from suitably skilled candidates regardless of ethnicity, gender, disability, sexuality, religion or age.

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This is an exciting and challenging position to undertake extensive accessibility at designated National Trust historic buildings and countryside properties for an initial 11 month contract to ensure Disability Discrimination Act compliance issues are identified and addressed.

Reporting to the Access for All Adviser you will need to have experience of accessibility audits, knowledge of the current legislation and a good understanding of the issues surrounding disability. A willingness to undertake extensive travel across the UK is essential.

For further details and an application form, please contact Stephanie Goodstadt at The National Trust, Rowan, Kembrey Park, Swindon SN2 8YL, or e-mail [recruitmentenquiries@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:recruitmentenquiries@nationaltrust.org.uk)

Closing date: 27th June 2003.

committed to equal opportunities

### • Wanted

**BERLINGO WITH REAR** wheelchair access. Any model considered but must have electric windows. South West area preferred. Tel: 01305 834315.

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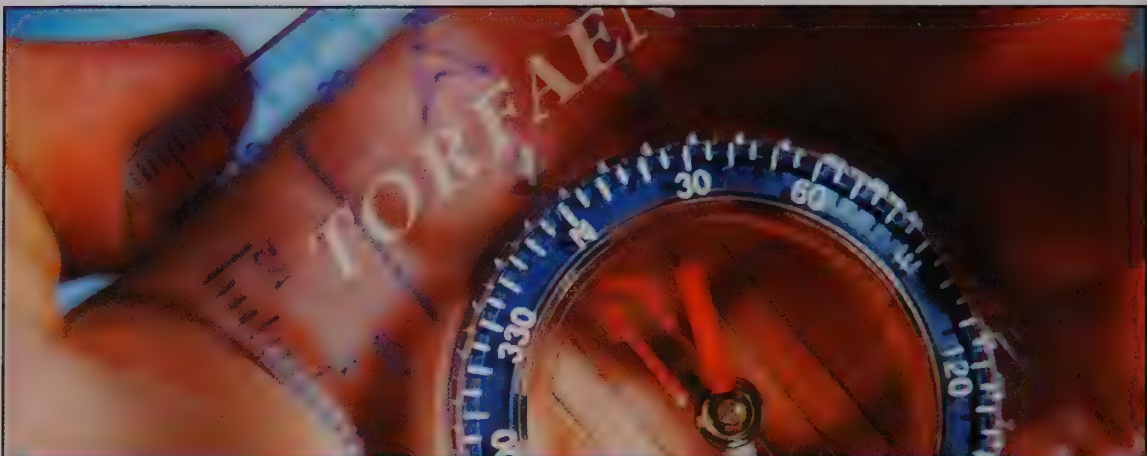
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## Where Would You Lead Our Community?

Torfaen Social Services has embarked on ambitious and innovative re-structuring of operations which has gained it much praise and recognition as a greatly improving service provider. We have listened to all stakeholders; ensuring maximum service delivery within budgetary constraints, "putting people first" and understanding the pressures and responsibilities of staff and valuing their contribution to the Social Care of Torfaen.

## SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT - COMMUNITY CARE DIVISION

## Team Manager - Physical Disabilities

Salary: £29,067 - £33,642

SCP: 40-46

Following a review of Respite, Day Activities and Carers Support, we are currently in the process of finalising and implementing innovative new Action plans for the improvement of services in these areas.

This is an exciting time to join the Management Team in Torfaen and ensure that people with a Physical disability / sensory impairment achieve a high profile in current service development.

As Team Manager - you will be responsible for the delivery of an effective and efficient care management service, ensuring quality of life for your clients.

In order to motivate your Team and enable the significant change agenda, your motivation and support will be ensured by senior managers and colleagues in the Community Care Management Team.

The successful candidate will have a minimum of three years post qualifying experience, including work with people with a disability / sensory impairment and will possess a Social Work, O.T., or other appropriate professional qualification.

For an informal discussion, please contact Stewart Robertson on 01633 648730.

This post is subject to an Enhanced Disclosure Application to the Criminal Records Bureau.

Please quote post and reference number: SS78/03

Application forms and further details may be obtained from the Human Resources Section, Social Services Department, Torfaen County Borough Council, County Hall, Cwmbran, Torfaen NP44 2WN.

Tel No 01633 648597 (voice mail)/648596. E-mail [socserv.recruitment@torfaen.gov.uk](mailto:socserv.recruitment@torfaen.gov.uk)

Closing date: Monday 9th June 2003

Interview Date: Tuesday 24th June 2003



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COUNTY  
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£72,316 - £97,470

East Kilbride or London

At DFID, our central focus is on an international commitment to halving the proportion of people in extreme poverty by 2015 – through sustainable development, education, and better management of natural and physical environments. So we are looking for individuals who can bring skills, understanding and patience to even the most complex development activities. Central to our work, and our core philosophy, is partnership working – with governments and international organisations committed to the elimination of poverty.

DFID is widely accepted as being a major proponent of best practice in promoting development and eliminating poverty. As a member of our senior management team, a key responsibility will be to maintain this standing – particularly through improvements in internal management practice and achieving a tighter fit between our mission and our structures, systems and people.

Our Finance and Accounts, Internal Audit, Performance and Effectiveness, and Procurement Departments will all fall under your guidance – amounting to some 200 people, and a budget of £8 million annually. You will contribute to corporate governance through membership of Management Board sub-committees, and offer the strongest leadership possible to your Division. You will also provide the highest standards of professional advice to the Management Board, Accounting Officer and Secretary of State on all financial and risk management issues, keeping us fully compliant with Government Accounting standards. You will invest corporately in the skill base of your team – and successfully oversee a programme of IT-enabled change to modernise our financial and management information systems. You will report to the Director General for Corporate Performance & Knowledge Sharing. This post will involve significant overseas travel.

This is an important remit. We are looking for an individual with professional expertise and personal credibility. You must have significant management experience and an interest in civil service and non-civil service delivery and performance management agendas. An interest in development issues is important – although your experience need not come from this sector.

This role is available as a fixed term or permanent contract – we will also consider candidates on secondment. Based on proven performance on the job, the normal salary range, quoted above, may be extended to a substantially higher figure for the very top performers.

The Civil Service offers a choice of final salary and stakeholder pensions, allowing you to choose the pension that best suits you. We also provide a range of flexible working policies – enabling you to balance work with your other commitments. Assistance with relocation may be available subject to negotiation.

DFID is an equal opportunities employer. Applications are welcomed from all parts of the community and we actively encourage interest from women, ethnic minority groups and those with a disability. Selection is on merit. Candidates must be nationals of member states of the European Economic Area (EEA), Swiss Nationals or citizens of the British Commonwealth with the right to work in the UK. The successful applicant will have to satisfy the British Government's developed vetting procedures.

For more information on this vacancy, DFID in general, and an electronic application form, visit our website [www.dfid.gov.uk](http://www.dfid.gov.uk) or email [dfid-recruitment@dfid.gov.uk](mailto:dfid-recruitment@dfid.gov.uk) to request an application pack – quoting Ref. DIR. FCP.

Closing date – 30 May 2003.

CIVIL SERVICE



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



DFID  
Department for  
International  
Development

[www.dfid.gov.uk](http://www.dfid.gov.uk)





## University of Leicester

Research Centre for Museum Studies  
and Galleries (RCMG)

### RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Department of Museum Studies  
Available until 15 June 2004

REF: R9559/DN  
Part-time (25%)

R&A1B £18,265 to £20,311 pa (full time equivalent)

Would you like to contribute to a new historical perspective on disabled people? 'Buried in the Footnotes' aims to search museums and galleries for evidence of the lives of disabled people. Experience of graduate-level research needed. We actively welcome applications from disabled people and will work with you to make access arrangements.

Information available in large print, tape, disk or e-mail.

► Downloadable application forms and further particulars are available by following the link below, or in hardcopy (including an information pack) from the Personnel Office. Tel: 0116 252 5114. Fax: 0116 252 5140. Email: [personnel@le.ac.uk](mailto:personnel@le.ac.uk), [www.le.ac.uk/personnel/jobs](http://www.le.ac.uk/personnel/jobs) Please note that CVs will only be accepted in support of a fully completed application form.

Closing date: 23 June 2003.

It is anticipated that Interviews will be held on 3 July 2003.

Promoting equality of opportunity throughout the University

### Muscular Dystrophy Campaign

### Grants Coordinator – JPMT, Muscular Dystrophy Campaign

Part time post, flexible hours – 17.5 hrs. Salary C £17,500 pro rata

The Muscular Dystrophy Campaign has a grant making charity – The Joseph Patrick Memorial Trust (JPMT) that provides grants – for equipment (such as electric wheelchairs) to improve the quality of life of people affected by muscular dystrophy. At present resources are around £115,000 per year, but with a new fundraising initiative it is hoped to extend the funds available.

The Campaign is looking for someone willing to undertake the strategic, policy development and partnership issues of the JPMT alongside an existing part-time worker.

The successful candidate will have experience in policy or grants administration as well as some experience in researching projects. They must have knowledge of disability issues and an interest in equipment and care services. Good written communication and interpersonal skills are essential.

This is an exciting opportunity and if you would like an application pack please contact Louise Neil by email: [louisen@muscular-dystrophy.org](mailto:louisen@muscular-dystrophy.org) fax 020 7819 1819 or write to Muscular Dystrophy Campaign, 7-11 Prescott Place, London SW4 6BS. **Closing date for applications is 30th May.**

The Muscular Dystrophy Campaign is an equal opportunities employer. Registered as a charity (205395)

## Where to hit target.

### Sales Team Leaders & Sales Support Team Leaders

Up to £25,000 + bonus and benefits

Basingstoke

Putting powerful leadership behind effective teamwork has helped Barclays Asset Finance win "Customer Care Team of the Year". Now here's your chance to win a few accolades yourself through the way you motivate and manage one of our award winning teams.

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Your ability to inspire loyalty and win the confidence of both your team and senior management will be the product of experience gained within a similar call centre team leadership role, ideally within financial services.

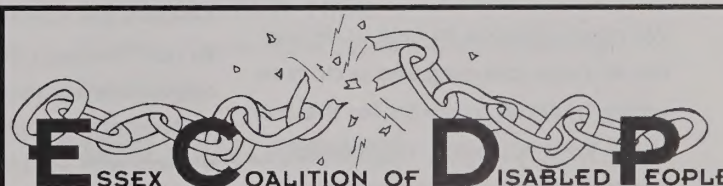
This is an opportunity to enhance your professional status within one of the world's leading financial services companies. You'll find the rewards, benefits and prospects for promotion more than reflect your skills and ambitions.

Please write with a full CV and details of your current salary to Dawn Smith, Barclays Asset Finance, Churchill Plaza, Churchill Way, Basingstoke, Hants RG21 7GL or email: [bassf.recruitment@barclays.co.uk](mailto:bassf.recruitment@barclays.co.uk) Please quote Ref: DNO1  
Closing date: Friday 6th June 2003.



Barclays is committed to equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

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Unit 7, Whitelands, Terling Road, Hatfield Peverel, Essex CM3 2AQ  
Tel/Fax: (01245) 382176 • Minicom: (01245) 382524 • Email: [info@ecdp.co.uk](mailto:info@ecdp.co.uk)

Essex Coalition of Disabled People (ECDP) is a local organisation run and controlled by disabled people. There are currently two vacancies available for suitable candidates who wish to actively support the work of this organisation.

### Assistant Director (NJC 34-36, £24,726 - £25,911 + pension)

The main focus of the job will be to increase the involvement of disabled people from all backgrounds in the work of ECDP, to represent the organisation in different forums and generally to assist the Managing Director to promote the work of ECDP. You will need to have a firm commitment to applying the principles of independent living and the social model of disability.

### Project Officer (NJC 19, 18.5 hrs pw £15,374 pro-rata + pension)

This is a new post created to support the development of a number of new initiatives planned for the organisation. Reporting to the Managing Director, you will undertake a range of duties and activities designed to enhance the service ECDP provides to its members. You will need to have a firm commitment to applying the principles of independent living and the social model of disability.

Both positions are subject to fixed funding of two years from the Community Fund, but this may be renewed subject to successful applications for further funding. The posts are open to disabled people only.

To receive an information pack and application form please contact the address above quoting Ref: AD3 for Assistant Director Ref: PO4 for Project Officer.

**Closing date for applications 20th June 2003.**  
Interviews for Assistant Director to be held on 1st July 2003.  
Interviews for Project Officer to be held on 4th July 2003.

**COMMUNITY  
FUND**  
Lottery money making a difference

Essex Coalition of Disabled People is a Company Limited by Guarantee Registration Number 4217686 and a Registered Charity Number 1091293.





## England's dynamic organisation for the arts

This is a great time to be joining our organisation. We are embarking on an era of expansion for the arts in England.

We believe in the power of the arts to transform people's lives. We are committed to diversity and to ensuring that people throughout the country can experience the highest quality arts.

If you have the experience and expertise we need, and if you are passionate about the arts, we would like to hear from you.

### Dance Officer

East Midlands (Nottingham)

**£23,000 - £29,000 pa + benefits**

As our Dance Officer, you'll have the experience to think and plan strategically, shaping and finalising the dance strategy for the region. We need someone who will create maximum regional and national impact delivering development in all areas of dance. You'll have a commitment to building capacity in under-represented sections of the dance community. Experience of advocating and developing initiatives that support individual and emerging artists, as well as the development of established venues and companies is important. **Ref No: EM007.**

### Resource Development Assistant Officer

West Midlands (Birmingham)

**£17,900 - £21,200 pa + benefits**

We need someone to help us deliver the strategic planning and policies to secure financial resources for the arts in the West Midlands. You'll have experience of raising resources, an awareness of resource development opportunities, small-scale project management experience and be able to relate to a diverse audience. **Ref No: WMO24.**

### Senior Officer Capital

Westminster

**£35,300 pa + benefits**

We need someone with a strong background in capital developments and sound understanding of financial business planning to manage a portfolio of projects under Grants for the arts - Capital, and to oversee a team whilst maintaining an overview of capital needs and service provision throughout England. You'll have strong communication and interpersonal skills, enjoy team working and have a commitment to the principles of diversity. **Ref No: NATO067.**

### Cultural Diversity Senior Officer Capital

Westminster

**£35,300 pa + benefits**

We're looking for an expert in cultural diversity, with good knowledge of relevant legislation and good practice, and experience of devising and leading successful diversity initiatives. Your job will be to assist with the delivery of a portfolio of culturally diverse capital projects by providing expert advice and support. You'll ensure the implementation of best practice in terms of cultural diversity across these projects. This will include overseeing a new post of Training Officer. It's our ambition to place cultural diversity at the heart of our organisation and you'll have the energy and commitment to help us turn our ambitions into actions. **Ref No: NATO084.**

### Training Officer Capital

Westminster

**£28,800 pa + benefits**

As our Training Officer you'll be responsible for recommending and co-ordinating training for our lead officers who deal with capital projects. You'll have a proven track record in organising events and activities and you'll have the experience to enable you to advise and 'signpost' arts organisations to appropriate training, working with our offices across England. You'll have excellent interpersonal and communication skills, strong report writing capabilities and a commitment to diversity. **Ref No: NATO085.**

### Visual Arts and Literature Assistant Officer

North West (Manchester)

**£17,400 - £22,000 pa + benefits**

We need a strong team player to contribute to the development of visual arts (with a particular emphasis on the Crafts) and literature in the North West, by providing efficient administrative support for projects, funding programmes, grant applications and other initiatives. You'll report to the Director of Visual Arts and Literature

and you'll have responsibility for a number of clients and partners, providing information and advice to customers and colleagues on your specialist areas. **Ref No: NWO19.**

### Development Officer Diversity London (Clerkenwell)

**£24,000 - £30,000 pa + benefits**

We need someone with a broad knowledge of cultural diversity, to develop and carry out an effective programme of diversity initiatives for the arts in London. As a member of our diversity team, you'll be able to lead on cultural and ethnic diversity policy, provide expert advice, build partnerships and promote effective use of our grants. You'll be an excellent communicator and negotiator, able to manage teams and projects. You'll be up to speed on relevant legislation and its application to the arts, and you'll have thorough knowledge of London's cultural diverse communities. **Ref No: LO70.**

### Co-ordinator, decibel project London (Clerkenwell) Fixed term contract to 31 March 2004

**£24,000 - £30,000 pa (pro-rata) + benefits**

**Decibel** is Arts Council England's initiative to raise the profile and develop the infrastructure for culturally diverse arts in England. We're looking for someone with the experience and expertise to raise the profile of **decibel** in London by carrying out a programme of advocacy with key opinion formers, working with artists and other partners to develop the programme in London, and promoting the initiative to audiences. You'll be an experienced manager of projects and budgets and a strong team player, able to increase recognition of work by artists and organisations from the African, Asian and Caribbean sectors. You'll be able to attract additional financial support through public and private sources, including other Lottery distributors, and you'll work with colleagues across our organisation on projects associated with **decibel**. **Ref No: LO100.**

For further information and application packs contact:

Clerkenwell

Email: [recruitment.l@arts council.org.uk](mailto:recruitment.l@arts council.org.uk)

Tel: 020 7608 6163

Textphone: 020 7608 4101

East Midlands (Nottingham)

Email: [liz.dunajewska@arts council.org.uk](mailto:liz.dunajewska@arts council.org.uk)

Tel: 0115 989 7561

North West (Manchester)

Email: [jobs.nw@arts council.org.uk](mailto:jobs.nw@arts council.org.uk)

Tel: 0161 827 9209

Minicom: 0161 834 9131

West Midlands (Birmingham)

Email: [jobs.wm@arts council.org.uk](mailto:jobs.wm@arts council.org.uk)

Tel: 0121 624 3200

Textphone: 0121 643 2815

Westminster

Email: [recruitment@arts council.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@arts council.org.uk)

Tel: 020 7973 5193

Textphone: 020 7973 5154

Details are also available on our website: [www.arts council.org.uk](http://www.arts council.org.uk)

The deadline for applications is 30 May 2003.

Arts Council England is committed to equal opportunities in recruitment and employment. We welcome applications from ethnic minorities, who are currently under-represented in our organisation. Disabled applicants who meet the person specification will be guaranteed an interview.

The Arts Council currently offers an attractive package of benefits including a contributory pension scheme, flexible working and a commitment to work/life balance.

We encourage opportunities for development, both personal and professional. Our terms and conditions are currently undergoing an extensive review and we expect some changes to our existing benefits packages.

Our Clerkenwell and Westminster offices are Positive about Disability. Our North West office is an Investor in People.

Our East Midlands and West Midlands offices are Investors in People and Positive about Disability.





## CLEARED FOR TAKE OFF

**T**he ultimate airshow experience. Prepare to be thrilled as the Royal International Air Tattoo 2003 sets the stage for the "smoke and thunder" of 21st century Top Guns, the magnificent Red Arrows and an A-list of national aerobatic teams, daring wing-walkers and a spectacular celebration of British triumphs in 100 Years of Flight. Over 30 nations will fly in for Europe's biggest airshow. And there's more family entertainment with hot air balloons, stalls, exhibits, road shows and exciting virtual reality rides.

DN has ten pairs of tickets on offer for the Show at RAF Fairford (near Swindon), so hurry and get your entry form back to our Freepost address to be in with a chance.

If you are not one of the lucky ones, you can still get tickets by calling 0870 758 1918 or log on to [www.airtattoo.com](http://www.airtattoo.com)



THE ROYAL INTERNATIONAL  
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19-20 July 2003  
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## THE GIRRELEPHANT CHAIR



**T**his is a flexible children's high chair that is designed to grow with your child, suitable for children aged 2-7. Originally developed with the department of neurophysiology at Great Ormond Street Hospital, London, the chair is suitable for children with a wide range of disabilities.

It is fully adjustable, both for child size and height, comfortably upholstered in durable, washable fabric, and includes a large activity tray and five point harness. Designed to provide a high level of stability, it is very robustly constructed and available in a wide range of colours. Prices start at £350.

DN can offer a lucky reader the chance to win one. Simply tick the High Chair box.

For further details, have a look at the advert on page 8.



## to enter

Tick the competition circle below, add your details, and send FOR FREE to *Disability Now*, Freepost WD4323, London N7 9BR, or you can fax it on 020 7619 7331, or e-mail the details to: [elizabeth.cowley@scope.org.uk](mailto:elizabeth.cowley@scope.org.uk)

- |                                  |   |                                  |
|----------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Car Seat   | <input type="radio"/> Atlas             | <input type="radio"/> DDA        |
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### terms & conditions

• closing date for entrants: 20.06.03. • Entrants must be over 18 • No proof of purchase required • UK entrants only • No cash alternatives • Winners notified by post • Editor's decision is final • Special offers not open to DN staff or associates • Winners may be announced in DN • In association with Elap Engineering Ltd, The AA, DDA, DDMC, Gowrings Mobility, PDQ International Ltd, RAFFBE and Hibau Ltd. We may use your name and address for further marketing purposes. Please tick the box if you do not wish your details to be included ☐

## DN next month



The Garden of Transparency from last year's Chelsea Flower Show.

All the best news, views, jobs and offers. On sale 30 June.

### REPORT BACK TIME

Chelsea Flower Show, Naidex and the Mobility Roadshow

### MIND YOUR LANGUAGE

DN investigates offensive references to disability

### OUT AND ABOUT (1)

Summertime trips for adults and kids

## NEWSAGENT ORDER FORM

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Name: .....

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**To the newsagent:** *Disability Now*, ISSN 0958-4676, is published monthly by Scope, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW.

It is distributed by MMC Ltd, Octagon House, White Hart Meadows, Ripley, Woking, Surrey GU23 6HR.

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# DN

disabilitynow

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## Sex abuse bill

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## Sea dog

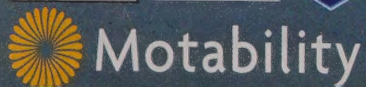
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